

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N^o. 472.]

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1868.

[PRICE 2d.

THE MOONSTONE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c. &c.

SECOND PERIOD. THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH. (1848—1849.)

CHAPTER VII.—(CONTINUED).

"I HAVE lost a beautiful girl, an excellent social position, and a handsome income," Mr. Godfrey began; "and I have submitted to it without a struggle. What can be the motive for such extraordinary conduct as that? My precious friend, there is no motive."

"No motive?" I repeated.

"Let me appeal, dear Miss Clack, to your experience of children," he went on. "A child pursues a certain course of conduct. You are greatly struck by it, and you attempt to get at the motive. The dear little thing is incapable of telling you its motive. You might as well ask the grass why it grows, or the birds why they sing. Well! in this matter, I am like the dear little thing—like the grass—like the birds. I don't know why I made a proposal of marriage to Miss Verinder. I don't know why I have shamefully neglected my dear Ladies. I don't know why I have apostatised from the Mothers'-Small-Clothes. You say to the child, Why have you been naughty? And the little angel puts its finger into its mouth, and doesn't know. My case exactly, Miss Clack! I couldn't confess it to anybody else. I feel impelled to confess it to *you*!"

I began to recover myself. A mental problem was involved here. I am deeply interested in mental problems—and I am not, it is thought, without some skill in solving them.

"Best of friends, exert your intellect, and help me," he proceeded. "Tell me—why does a time come when these matrimonial proceedings of mine begin to look like something done in a dream? Why does it suddenly occur to me that my true happiness is in helping my dear Ladies, in going my modest round of useful work, in saying my few earnest words when called on by my Chairman? What do I want with a position? I have got a position. What do I want with an income? I can pay for my bread and cheese, and my nice little lodgings, and my two coats a year. What do I want with Miss Verinder? She has told me

with her own lips (this, dear lady, is between ourselves) that she loves another man, and that her only idea in marrying me is to try and put that other man out of her head. What a horrid union is this! Oh, dear me, what a horrid union is this! Such are my reflections, Miss Clack, on my way to Brighton. I approach Rachel with the feeling of a criminal who is going to receive his sentence. When I find that she has changed her mind too—when I hear her propose to break the engagement—I experience (there is no sort of doubt about it) a most overpowering sense of relief. A month ago I was pressing her rapturously to my bosom. An hour ago, the happiness of knowing that I shall never press her again, intoxicates me like strong liquor. The thing seems impossible—the thing can't be. And yet there are the facts, as I had the honour of stating them when we first sat down together in these two chairs. I have lost a beautiful girl, an excellent social position, and a handsome income; and I have submitted to it without a struggle. Can you account for it, dear friend? It's quite beyond me."

His magnificent head sank on his breast, and he gave up his own mental problem in despair.

I was deeply touched. The case (if I may speak as a spiritual physician) was now quite plain to me. It is no uncommon event, in the experience of us all, to see the possessors of exalted ability occasionally humbled to the level of the most poorly-gifted people about them. The object, no doubt, in the wise economy of Providence, is to remind greatness that it is mortal, and that the power which has conferred it can also take it away. It was now—to my mind—easy to discern one of these salutary humiliations in the deplorable proceedings on dear Mr. Godfrey's part, of which I had been the unseen witness. And it was equally easy to recognise the welcome reappearance of his own finer nature in the horror with which he recoiled from the idea of marriage with Rachel, and in the charming eagerness which he showed to return to his Ladies and his Poor.

I put this view before him in a few simple and sisterly words. His joy was beautiful to see. He compared himself, as I went on, to a lost man emerging from the darkness into the light. When I answered for a loving reception of him at the Mothers'-Small-Clothes, the

grateful heart of our Christian Hero overflowed. He pressed my hands alternately to his lips. Overwhelmed by the exquisite triumph of having got him back among us, I let him do what he liked with my hands. I closed my eyes. I felt my head, in an ecstasy of spiritual self-forgetfulness, sinking on his shoulder. In moment more I should certainly have swooned away in his arms, but for an interruption from the outer world, which brought me to myself again. A horrid rattling of knives and forks sounded outside the door, and the footman came in to lay the table for luncheon.

Mr. Godfrey started up, and looked at the clock on the mantel-piece.

"How time flies with *you*!" he exclaimed. "I shall surely catch the train."

I ventured on asking why he was in such a hurry to get back to town. His answer reminded me of family difficulties that were still to be reconciled, and of family disagreements that were yet to come.

"I have heard from my father," he said. "Business obliges him to leave Frizinghall for London to-day, and he proposes coming on here, either this evening or to-morrow. I must tell him what has happened between Rachel and me. His heart is set on our marriage—there will be great difficulty, I fear, in reconciling him to the breaking-off of the engagement. I must stop him, for all our sakes, from coming here till he is reconciled. Best and dearest of friends, we shall meet again!"

With those words he hurried out. In equal haste on my side, I ran up-stairs to compose myself in my own room before meeting Aunt Ablewhite and Rachel at the luncheon-table.

I am well aware—to dwell for a moment yet on the subject of Mr. Godfrey—that the all-profaning opinion of the world has charged him with having his own private reasons for releasing Rachel from her engagement, at the first opportunity she gave him. It has also reached my ears, that his anxiety to recover his place in my estimation has been attributed, in certain quarters, to a mercenary eagerness to make his peace (through me) with a venerable committee-woman at the Mothers'-Small-Clothes, abundantly blessed with the goods of this world, and a beloved and intimate friend of my own. I only notice these odious slanders for the sake of declaring that they never had a moment's influence on my mind. In obedience to my instructions, I have exhibited the fluctuations in my opinion of our Christian Hero, exactly as I find them recorded in my diary. In justice to myself, let me here add that, once reinstated in his place in my estimation, my gifted friend never lost that place again. I write with the tears in my eyes, burning to say more. But no—I am cruelly limited to my actual experience of persons and things. In less than a month from the time of which I am now writing, events in the money-market (which diminished even *my* miserable little income) forced me into foreign exile, and left me with nothing but a loving remembrance of Mr.

Godfrey which the slander of the world has assailed, and assailed in vain.

Let me dry my eyes, and return to my narrative.

I went down-stairs to luncheon, naturally anxious to see how Rachel was affected by her release from her marriage engagement.

It appeared to me—but I own I am a poor authority in such matters—that the recovery of her freedom had set her thinking again of that other man whom she loved, and that she was furious with herself for not being able to control a revulsion of feeling of which she was secretly ashamed. Who was the man? I had my suspicions—but it was needless to waste time in idle speculation. When I had converted her, she would, as a matter of course, have no concealments from Me. I should hear all about the man; I should hear all about the Moonstone. If I had had no higher object in stirring her up to a sense of spiritual things, the motive of relieving her mind of its guilty secrets would have been enough of itself to encourage me to go on.

Aunt Ablewhite took her exercise in the afternoon in an invalid chair. Rachel accompanied her. "I wish I could drag the chair," she broke out, recklessly. "I wish I could fatigue myself till I was ready to drop!"

She was in the same humour in the evening. I discovered in one of my friend's precious publications—*The Life, Letters, and Labours of Miss Jane Ann Stamper*, forty-fifth edition—passages which bore with a marvellous appropriateness on Rachel's present position. Upon my proposing to read them, she went to the piano. Conceive how little she must have known of serious people, if she supposed that my patience was to be exhausted in that way! I kept Miss Jane Ann Stamper by me, and waited for events with the most unfaltering trust in the future.

Old Mr. Ablewhite never made his appearance that night. But I knew the importance which his worldly greed attached to his son's marriage with Miss Verinder—and I felt a positive conviction (do what Mr. Godfrey might to prevent it) that we should see him the next day. With his interference in the matter, the storm on which I had counted would certainly come, and the salutary exhaustion of Rachel's resisting powers would as certainly follow. I am not ignorant that old Mr. Ablewhite has the reputation generally (especially among his inferiors) of being a remarkably good-natured man. According to my observation of him, he deserves his reputation as long as he has his own way, and not a moment longer.

The next day, exactly as I had foreseen, Aunt Ablewhite was as near to being astonished as her nature would permit, by the sudden appearance of her husband. He had barely been a minute in the house, before he was followed, to my astonishment this time, by an unexpected complication, in the shape of Mr. Bruff.

I never remember feeling the presence of the

lawyer to be more unwelcome than I felt it at that moment. He looked ready for anything in the way of an obstructive proceeding—capable even of keeping the peace, with Rachel for one of the combatants!

"This is a pleasant surprise, sir," said Mr. Ablewhite, addressing himself with his deceptive cordiality to Mr. Bruff. "When I left your office yesterday, I didn't expect to have the honour of seeing you at Brighton to-day."

"I turned over our conversation in my mind, after you had gone," replied Mr. Bruff. "And it occurred to me that I might perhaps be of some use on this occasion. I was just in time to catch the train, and I had no opportunity of discovering the carriage in which you were travelling."

Having given that explanation, he seated himself by Rachel. I retired modestly to a corner—with Miss Jane Ann Stamper on my lap, in case of emergency. My aunt sat at the window, placidly fanning herself as usual. Mr. Ablewhite stood up in the middle of the room, with his bald head much pinker than I had ever seen it yet, and addressed himself in the most affectionate manner to his niece.

"Rachel, my dear," he said, "I have heard some very extraordinary news from Godfrey. And I am here to inquire about it. You have a sitting-room of your own in this house. Will you honour me by showing me the way to it?"

Rachel never moved. Whether she was determined to bring matters to a crisis, or whether she was prompted by some private sign from Mr. Bruff, is more than I can tell. She declined doing old Mr. Ablewhite the honour of conducting him to her sitting-room.

"Whatever you wish to say to me," she answered, "can be said here—in the presence of my relatives, and in the presence" (she looked at Mr. Bruff) "of my mother's trusted old friend."

"Just as you please, my dear," said the amiable Mr. Ablewhite. He took a chair. The rest of them looked at his face—as if they expected it, after seventy years of worldly training, to speak the truth. I looked at the top of his bald head; having noticed, on other occasions, that the temper which was really in him had a habit of registering itself *there*.

"Some weeks ago," pursued the old gentleman, "my son informed me that Miss Verinder had done him the honour to engage herself to marry him. Is it possible, Rachel, that he can have misinterpreted—or presumed upon—what you really said to him?"

"Certainly not," she replied. "I did engage myself to marry him."

"Very frankly answered!" said Mr. Ablewhite. "And most satisfactory, my dear, so far. In respect to what happened some weeks since, Godfrey has made no mistake. The error is evidently in what he told me yesterday. I begin to see it now. You and he have had a lovers' quarrel—and my foolish son has interpreted it seriously. Ah! I should have known better than that, at his age."

The fallen nature in Rachel—the mother Eve, so to speak—began to chafe at this.

"Pray let us understand each other, Mr. Ablewhite," she said. "Nothing in the least like a quarrel took place yesterday between your son and me. If he told you that I proposed breaking off our marriage engagement, and that he agreed on his side—he told you the truth."

The self-registering thermometer at the top of Mr. Ablewhite's bald head, began to indicate a rise of temper. His face was more amiable than ever—but *there* was the pink at the top of his face, a shade deeper already!

"Come, come, my dear!" he said in his most soothing manner, "now don't be angry, and don't be hard on poor Godfrey! He has evidently said some unfortunate thing. He was always clumsy from a child—but he means well, Rachel, he means well!"

"Mr. Ablewhite, I have either expressed myself very badly, or you are purposely mistaking me. Once for all, it is a settled thing between your son and myself that we remain, for the rest of our lives, cousins and nothing more. Is that plain enough?"

The tone in which she said those words made it impossible, even for old Mr. Ablewhite, to mistake her any longer. His thermometer went up another degree, and his voice when he next spoke, ceased to be the voice which is appropriate to a notoriously good-natured man.

"I am to understand, then," he said, "that your marriage engagement is broken off?"

"You are to understand that, Mr. Ablewhite, if you please."

"I am also to take it as a matter of fact that the proposal to withdraw from the engagement came, in the first instance, from *you*?"

"It came, in the first instance, from me. And it met, as I have told you, with your son's consent and approval."

The thermometer went up to the top of the register. I mean, the pink changed suddenly to scarlet.

"My son is a mean-spirited hound!" cried this furious old worldling. "In justice to myself as his father—not in justice to *him*—I beg to ask you, Miss Verinder, what complaint you have to make of Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite?"

Here Mr. Bruff interfered for the first time.

"You are not bound to answer that question," he said to Rachel.

Old Mr. Ablewhite fastened on him instantly.

"Don't forget, sir," he said, "that you are a self-invited guest here. Your interference would have come with a better grace if you had waited until it was asked for."

Mr. Bruff took no notice. The smooth varnish on *his* wicked old face never cracked. Rachel thanked him for the advice he had given to her, and then turned to old Mr. Ablewhite—preserving her composure in a manner which (having regard to her age and her sex) was simply awful to see.

"Your son put the same question to me which you have just asked," she said. "I

had only one answer for him, and I have only one answer for you. I proposed that we should release each other, because reflection had convinced me that I should best consult his welfare and mine by retracting a rash promise, and leaving him free to make his choice elsewhere."

"What has my son done?" persisted Mr. Ablewhite. "I have a right to know that. What has my son done?"

She persisted just as obstinately on her side.

"You have had the only explanation which I think it necessary to give to you, or to him," she answered.

"In plain English, it's your sovereign will and pleasure, Miss Verinder, to jilt my son?"

Rachel was silent for a moment. Sitting close behind her, I heard her sigh. Mr. Bruff took her hand, and gave it a little squeeze. She recovered herself, and answered Mr. Ablewhite as boldly as ever.

"I have exposed myself to worse misconception than that," she said. "And I have borne it patiently. The time has gone by, when you could mortify me by calling me a jilt."

She spoke with a bitterness of tone which satisfied me that the scandal of the Moonstone had been in some way recalled to her mind. "I have no more to say," she added, wearily, not addressing the words to any one in particular, and looking away from us all, out of the window that was nearest to her.

Mr. Ablewhite got upon his feet, and pushed away his chair so violently that it toppled over and fell on the floor.

"I have something more to say on my side," he announced, bringing down the flat of his hand on the table with a bang. "I have to say that if my son doesn't feel this insult, I do!"

Rachel started, and looked at him in sudden surprise.

"Insult?" she repeated. "What do you mean?"

"Insult!" reiterated Mr. Ablewhite. "I know your motive, Miss Verinder, for breaking your promise to my son! I know it as certainly as if you had confessed it in so many words. Your cursed family pride is insulting Godfrey, as it insulted *me* when I married your aunt. Her family—her beggarly family—turned their backs on her for marrying an honest man, who had made his own place and won his own fortune. I had no ancestors. I wasn't descended from a set of cut-throat scoundrels who lived by robbery and murder. I couldn't point to the time when the Ablewhites hadn't a shirt to their backs, and couldn't sign their own names. Ha! ha! I wasn't good enough for the Herncastles, when *I* married. And, now it comes to the pinch, my son isn't good enough for *you*. I suspected it, all along. You have got the Herneastle blood in you, my young lady! I suspected it all along."

"A very unworthy suspicion," remarked Mr. Bruff. "I am astonished that you have the courage to acknowledge it."

Before Mr. Ablewhite could find words to

answer in, Rachel spoke in a tone of the most exasperating contempt.

"Surely," she said to the lawyer, "this is beneath notice. If he can think in *that* way, let us leave him to think as he pleases."

From scarlet, Mr. Ablewhite was now becoming purple. He gasped for breath; he looked backwards and forwards from Rachel to Mr. Bruff in such a frenzy of rage with both of them that he didn't know which to attack first. His wife, who had sat impenetrably fanning herself up to this time, began to be alarmed, and attempted, quite uselessly, to quiet him. I had, throughout this distressing interview, felt more than one inward call to interfere with a few earnest words, and had controlled myself under a dread of the possible results, very unworthy of a Christian Englishwoman who looks, not to what is meanly prudent, but to what is morally right. At the point at which matters had now arrived, I rose superior to all considerations of mere expediency. If I had contemplated interposing any remonstrance of my own humble devising, I might possibly still have hesitated. But the distressing domestic emergency which now confronted me, was most marvellously and beautifully provided for in the Correspondence of Miss Jane Ann Stamper—Letter one thousand and one, on "Peace in Families." I rose in my modest corner, and I opened my precious book.

"Dear Mr. Ablewhite," I said, "one word!"

When I first attracted the attention of the company by rising, I could see that he was on the point of saying something rude to me. My sisterly form of address checked him. He stared in heathen astonishment.

"As an affectionate well-wisher and friend," I proceeded, "and as one long accustomed to arouse, convince, prepare, enlighten, and fortify others, permit me to take the most pardonable of all liberties—the liberty of composing your mind."

He began to recover himself; he was on the point of breaking out—he *would* have broken out, with anybody else. But my voice (habitually gentle) possesses a high note or so, in emergencies. In this emergency, I felt imperatively called upon to have the highest voice of the two.

I held up my precious book before him; I rapped the open page impressively with my forefinger. "Not my words!" I exclaimed, in a burst of fervent interruption. "Oh, don't suppose that I claim attention for My humble words! Manna in the wilderness, Mr. Ablewhite! Dew on the parched earth! Words of comfort, words of wisdom, words of love—the blessed, blessed, blessed words of Miss Jane Ann Stamper!"

I was stopped there by a momentary impediment of the breath. Before I could recover myself, this monster in human form shouted out furiously,

"Miss Jane Ann Stamper be —!"

It is impossible for me to write the awful word, which is here represented by a blank. I

shrieked as it passed his lips ; I flew to my little bag on the side table ; I shook out all my tracts ; I seized the one particular tract on profane swearing, entitled, "Hush for Heaven's Sake!" ; I handed it to him with an expression of agonised entreaty. He tore it in two, and threw it back at me across the table. The rest of them rose in alarm, not knowing what might happen next. I instantly sat down again in my corner. There had once been an occasion, under somewhat similar circumstances, when Miss Jane Ann Stamper had been taken by the two shoulders and turned out of a room. I waited, inspired by her spirit, for a repetition of her martyrdom.

But no—it was not to be. His wife was the next person whom he addressed. "Who—who—who," he said, stammering with rage, "asked this impudent fanatic into the house? Did you?"

Before Aunt Ablewhite could say a word, Rachel answered for her :

"Miss Clack is here," she said, "as my guest."

Those words had a singular effect on Mr. Ablewhite. They suddenly changed him from a man in a state of red-hot anger to a man in a state of icy-cold contempt. It was plain to everybody that Rachel had said something—short and plain as her answer had been—which gave him the upper hand of her at last.

"Oh?" he said. "Miss Clack is here as your guest—in my house?"

It was Rachel's turn to lose her temper at that. Her colour rose, and her eyes brightened fiercely. She turned to the lawyer, and, pointing to Mr. Ablewhite, asked, haughtily, "What does he mean?"

Mr. Bruff interfered for the third time.

"You appear to forget," he said, addressing Mr. Ablewhite, "that you took this house as Miss Verinder's guardian, for Miss Verinder's use."

"Not quite so fast," interposed Mr. Ablewhite. "I have a last word to say, which I should have said some time since, if this—" He looked my way, pondering what abominable name he should call me—"if this Rampant Spinster had not interrupted us. I beg to inform you, sir, that, if my son is not good enough to be Miss Verinder's husband, I cannot presume to consider his father good enough to be Miss Verinder's guardian. Understand, if you please, that I refuse to accept the position which is offered to me by Lady Verinder's will. In your legal phrase, I decline to act. This house has necessarily been hired in my name. I take the entire responsibility of it on my shoulders. It is my house. I can keep it, or let it, just as I please. I have no wish to hurry Miss Verinder. On the contrary, I beg her to remove her guest and her luggage, at her own entire convenience." He made a low bow, and walked out of the room.

That was Mr. Ablewhite's revenge on Rachel, for refusing to marry his son!

The instant the door closed, Aunt Able-

white exhibited a phenomenon which silenced us all. She became endowed with energy enough to cross the room!

"My dear," she said, taking Rachel by the hand, "I should be ashamed of my husband, if I didn't know that it is his temper which has spoken to you, and not himself. You," continued Aunt Ablewhite, turning on me in my corner with another endowment of energy, in her looks this time instead of her limbs—"you are the mischievous person who irritated him. I hope I shall never see you or your tracts again." She went back to Rachel, and kissed her. "I beg your pardon, my dear," she said, "in my husband's name. What can I do for you?"

Consistently perverse in everything—capricious and unreasonable in all the actions of her life—Rachel melted into tears at those commonplace words, and returned her aunt's kiss in silence.

"If I may be permitted to answer for Miss Verinder," said Mr. Bruff, "might I ask you, Mrs. Ablewhite, to send Penelope down with her mistress's bonnet and shawl. Leave us ten minutes together," he added, in a lower tone, "and you may rely on my settling matters right, to your satisfaction as well as to Rachel's."

The trust of the family in this man was something wonderful to see. Without a word more, on her side, Aunt Ablewhite left the room.

"Ah!" said Mr. Bruff, looking after her. "The Herncastle blood has its drawbacks, I admit. But there is something in good breeding, after all!"

Having made that purely worldly remark, he looked hard at my corner, as if he expected me to go. My interest in Rachel—an infinitely higher interest than his—riveted me to my chair.

Mr. Bruff gave it up, exactly as he had given it up at Aunt Verinder's, in Montagu Square. He led Rachel to a chair by the window, and spoke to her there.

"My dear young lady," he said, "Mr. Ablewhite's conduct has naturally shocked you, and taken you by surprise. If it was worth while to contest the question with such a man, we might soon show him that he is not to have things all his own way. But it isn't worth while. You were quite right in what you said just now: he is beneath our notice."

He stopped, and looked round at my corner. I sat there quite immovable, with my tracts at my elbow, and with Miss Jane Ann Stamper on my lap.

"You know," he resumed, turning back again to Rachel, "that it was part of your poor mother's fine nature always to see the best of the people about her, and never the worst. She named her brother-in-law your guardian because she believed in him, and because she thought it would please her sister. I had never liked Mr. Ablewhite myself, and I induced your mother to let me insert a clause in the will, empowering her executors, in certain events, to

consult with me about the appointment of a new guardian. One of those events has happened to-day; and I find myself in a position to end all these dry business details, I hope agreeably, with a message from my wife. Will you honour Mrs. Bruff by becoming her guest? And will you remain under my roof, and be one of my family, until we wise people have laid our heads together, and have settled what is to be done next?"

At those words, I rose to interfere. Mr. Bruff had done exactly what I had dreaded he would do, when he asked Mrs. Ablewhite for Rachel's bonnet and shawl.

Before I could interpose a word, Rachel had accepted his invitation in the warmest terms. If I suffered the arrangement thus made between them to be carried out—if she once passed the threshold of Mr. Bruff's door—farewell to the fondest hope of my life, the hope of bringing my lost sheep back to the fold! The bare idea of such a calamity as this quite overwhelmed me. I cast the miserable trammels of worldly discretion to the winds, and spoke with the fervour that filled me, in the words that came first.

"Stop!" I said—"stop! I must be heard. Mr. Bruff! you are not related to her, and I am. I invite her—I summon the executors to appoint *me* guardian. Rachel, dearest Rachel, I offer you my modest home; come to London by the next train, love, and share it with me!"

Mr. Bruff said nothing. Rachel looked at me with a cruel astonishment which she made no effort to conceal.

"You are very kind, Drusilla," she said. "I shall hope to visit you whenever I happen to be in London. But I have accepted Mr. Bruff's invitation, and I think it will be best, for the present, if I remain under Mr. Bruff's care."

"Oh, don't say so!" I pleaded. "I can't part with you, Rachel, — I can't part with you!"

I tried to fold her in my arms. But she drew back. My fervour did not communicate itself; it only alarmed her.

"Surely," she said, "this is a very unnecessary display of agitation? I don't understand it."

"No more do I," said Mr. Bruff.

Their hardness—their hideous, worldly hardness—revolted me.

"Oh, Rachel! Rachel!" I burst out. "Haven't you seen *yet*, that my heart yearns to make a Christian of you? Has no inner voice told you that I am trying to do for *you*, what I was trying to do for your dear mother when death snatched her out of my hands?"

Rachel advanced a step nearer, and looked at me very strangely.

"I don't understand your reference to my mother," she said. "Miss Clack, will you have the goodness to explain yourself?"

Before I could answer, Mr. Bruff came forward, and offering his arm to Rachel, tried to lead her out of the room.

"You had better not pursue the subject, my

dear," he said. "And Miss Clack had better not explain herself."

If I had been a stock or a stone, such an interference as this must have roused me into testifying to the truth. I put Mr. Bruff aside indignantly with my own hand, and, in solemn and suitable language, I stated the view with which sound doctrine does not scruple to regard the awful calamity of dying unprepared.

Rachel started back from me—I blush to write it—with a scream of horror.

"Come away!" she said to Mr. Bruff. "Come away, for God's sake, before that woman can say any more! Oh, think of my poor mother's harmless, useful, beautiful life! You were at the funeral, Mr. Bruff; you saw how everybody loved her; you saw the poor helpless people crying at her grave over the loss of their best friend. And that wretch stands there, and tries to make me doubt that my mother, who was an angel on earth, is an angel in Heaven now! Don't stop to talk about it! Come away! It stifles me to breathe the same air with her! It frightens me to feel that we are in the same room together!"

Deaf to all remonstrance, she ran to the door.

At the same moment, her maid entered with her bonnet and shawl. She huddled them on anyhow. "Pack my things," she said, "and bring them to Mr. Bruff's." I attempted to approach her—I was shocked and grieved, but, it is needless to say, not offended. I only wished to say to her, "May your hard heart be softened! I freely forgive you!" She pulled down her veil, and tore her shawl away from my hand, and, hurrying out, shut the door in my face. I bore the insult with my customary fortitude. I remember it now with my customary superiority to all feeling of offence.

Mr. Bruff had his parting word of mockery for me, before he too hurried out, in his turn.

"You had better not have explained yourself, Miss Clack," he said, and bowed, and left the room.

The person with the cap-ribbons followed.

"It's easy to see who has set them all by the ears together," she said. "I'm only a poor servant—but I declare I'm ashamed of you!" She too went out, and banged the door after her.

I was left alone in the room. Reviled by them all, deserted by them all, I was left alone in the room.

Is there more to be added to this plain statement of facts—to this touching picture of a Christian persecuted by the world? No! my diary reminds me that one more of the many chequered chapters in my life, ends here. From that day forth, I never saw Rachel Verinder again. She had my forgiveness at the time when she insulted me. She has had my prayerful good wishes ever since. And when I die—to complete the return on my part of good for

evil—she will have the Life, Letters, and Labours of Miss Jane Ann Stamper left her as a legacy by my will.

LIGHTING BY OXYGEN.

THE experiments in lighting by oxygen lately made in the Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, Paris, have attracted so much attention, and have been considered so important, that a statement of their nature may be opportune. The question, in fact, is very complex, comprising, in addition to its scientific bearings, the grand consideration of economy.

Everybody knows that the ordinary gas for lighting burns, like all other combustibles, by combining with the oxygen which is one of the constituents of atmospheric air. The brightness of the light depends, at the same time, on the solid particles contained in the gas, and on the rapidity with which those particles are burnt by contact with the oxygen.

When a candle or a gas-burner is lighted in a room, the combustion is effected by means of the oxygen in the air. The oxygen, diluted by azote (another constituent of atmospheric air), does not reach the flame with sufficient rapidity and abundance to draw forth its greatest amount of brightness. The phenomenon is similar to that which occurs in a fireplace in which the fire is burning slowly. If you put on the blower, the flame becomes whiter and the flame brightens up. The reason is that, by causing a stronger draught of air, you increase the rapidity of the combustion. In a petroleum lamp the same effect is very apparent. The dingy and sooty flame becomes brilliantly white as soon as the fixing of the glass in its place has determined a strong current of air to set in.

The combustion of a flame in air takes place under unfavourable conditions. The combustible is not utilised to the full extent of which it is capable. The remedy for this is to supply the flame artificially with all the oxygen it requires, instead of leaving it to extract laboriously what it can from the atmosphere. On this clear and simple principle is based the fundamental idea of lighting by oxygen. To manufacture oxygen; to put it within reach of a combustible rich in solid matters, and so to make it give out and render its greatest illuminating power: such is the problem to be solved.

The proceeding is so simple and so familiar to chemists and natural philosophers, that it has almost daily been put in practice in courses of lectures and in laboratories, under one shape or another. The burning of iron-wire in a jar of oxygen is an old and familiar experiment. If, instead of burning ordinary gas and oxygen merely by their mutual contact, you insert a piece of chalk, or lime, or magnesia into the flame, the solid becomes heated and emits a light of dazzling brightness. This is the Drummond light, so called after its inventor, which,

before the employment of the electric light, was used, and still frequently renders good service, in heightening the splendour of scenic effects in the principal theatres of London and Paris. For some time past endeavours have been made to utilize it for lighting purposes. The attempts, therefore, made at the Hôtel-de-Ville are far from being a novelty.

There exist at least twenty English patents and fifteen French brevets for methods of lighting by oxygen. So long back as 1834, an able natural philosopher, M. Galy Cazalat, experimented on the system in Paris. Similar attempts were repeated in 1858, in the Bois de Boulogne; in 1860, in London; and again, in 1865, by Mr. Parker, who, by substituting magnesia for chalk, considerably increased the intensity of light; in spite of which, the new mode of lighting was nowhere turned to serious account, although the light, so easily obtained, is extremely beautiful, and the object of general admiration.

The cause of its not having been adopted for public use was the high cost price of oxygen. Oxygen, as the product of the laboratory, obtained by decomposing bioxyde of manganese at an elevated temperature, could not be offered at mercantile prices. There could, therefore, be no reasonable hope of applying the Drummond light to every-day purposes. The problem, in consequence, shifted its ground; the essential point was to manufacture cheap oxygen, and every effort was turned in that direction. A distinguished chemist, M. Boussingault, of the Academy of Sciences, opened the way, by discovering a very ingenious mode of production, but unfortunately too slow to be turned to profitable account. He employs a substance known in laboratories as the bioxyde of barium; this, when heated, gives up a portion of the oxygen of which it is formed, and which it has the power of reabsorbing when subjected to a current of air previously heated to a proper temperature. To obtain oxygen, it therefore suffices to extract it from bioxyde of barium, and then to restore that substance to its primitive state; and so on, repeating the same operation. This mode of practice has its inconveniences when carried out on a large scale. M. Archereau afterwards endeavoured to obtain the same results by the decomposition of sulphuric acid.

Last year, a young chemist, M. Mallet, pointed out a process analogous to M. Boussingault's, which M. Dumas communicated to the Academy in terms of praise. It consists in heating the protochloride of copper in contact with the air. This composite substance absorbs oxygen, and is thereby transformed into an oxychloride. The temperature is then raised to four hundred degrees centigrade, and the oxychloride returns to its former condition, yielding up the oxygen. Thus, by means of a single heating, the oxygen of the atmosphere is transferred to a given mass of material, and afterwards stored in a gasometer. By this extremely ingenious method we can lay hands on

the oxygen which flows around us, and then make it pass wherever we please.

The process at present under experiment, which is not M. Mallet's, is due to M. Tessié du Motay, and supplies oxygen at so reduced a price that it can be advantageously employed in the arts. M. du Motay resolves the problem by charging with atmospheric oxygen the substance known to chemists as manganate of soda, or potash. The oxydation is effected by directing upon the manganate a current of hot air, which transforms it into permanganate. The oxygen which the substance has absorbed is then driven out by a current of steam heated to four hundred and fifty degrees. It is the same legerdemain trick as in the preceding instance. You borrow oxygen from the air, you imprison it in a solid substance, and then you drive it into a reservoir to await your will. That is the whole secret of the operation. It is, in short, a simple transfer effected by heat—a separation of the oxygen from the azote of the atmosphere, thus giving it to us in a state of purity. The cost price of oxygen so obtained by M. du Motay is something less than seven-pence the cubic yard.

The only novelty, therefore, of the experiments at the Hôtel-de-Ville lies not, as is generally supposed, in the mode of lighting, but in the mode of extracting oxygen from the air. They have united there, in fact, miniature gas-works and a system of tubing. The gas-generator is placed in the cellars of the Assistance Publique, and the oxygen is thence conducted in tubes to the four tall candelabra which light the Place on the side of the Rue de Rivoli. Six cylindrical cast-iron retorts, about ten feet in length, are placed one over the other in a furnace, and made red hot. The first three are full of manganate of soda, the other three of permanganate of soda.

A ventilator, worked by a portable steam-engine, drives a current of hot air into the first. This air is previously freed of carbonic acid by passing through a mixture of lime and water. Here, consequently, the oxydation is effected. The apparatus is charged with oxygen extracted from the air. On the other hand, a boiler under pressure sends a jet of steam into the three other retorts full of permanganate, that is, of oxygenised manganate; and in them, the disoxydation takes place. The oxygen stolen from the air by the first operation is driven off, and carried away and stored in a gasometer. By thus successively treating each group of retorts by the agency of a current of air and of steam, they are charged with oxygen, which is then taken from them to be carried by tubes to its destination.

The act of lighting is thus effected. Each burner, enclosed in a lamp, is double, comprising one for the bicarbonated hydrogen and another for the oxygen, subdividing into two still narrow conduits, in order to obtain a closer contact between the gas and a small stick of compressed magnesia fixed in the middle. The introduction of the oxygen and the ordinary

gas is regulated by hand, until the magnesia cylinder gives its maximum of brightness. The candelabra have each five burners. Of the beauty of the light there can be but one opinion.

Oxygen light, in fact, possesses great brilliancy, as well as fixity, even in a high wind, which is invaluable. During the storm of the eighteenth of January last, the candelabra filled with the Drummond light never ceased to shine, while candelabra holding ordinary burners were blown out one after the other. The experiment has also been continued long enough for M. Tessié du Motay's method of obtaining oxygen to be held as practically established; and this is an important fact to note, even if it were only to be applied to lighting in special cases. But for lighting purposes only, it opens a wide horizon; independent of which, it may possibly effect considerable modifications in metallurgy.

The superior brilliancy of the new mode of lighting over the old one is evident. The flame of common gas looks yellow beside the Drummond candelabra. But what is required in order to form a judgment of the real value of the new system is, to ascertain the actual cost price of the photometric unity of light. It is estimated that the oxygen light, according to the kind of burner employed, may be ten, fifteen, and even twenty times more powerful than the light of gas. There would, therefore, be manifest economy in employing it, if other elements of appreciation had not to be considered. It must not be forgotten that lighting by oxygen requires a double set of pipes and a special apparatus.

We are also too apt to confound the brightness of a light with its illuminating power. Thus, although in the Hôtel-de-Ville experiments, the magnesia cylinder, brilliant as it was, did not pain the eye, the reason was that it was raised five yards above the level of the ground, whereas, had it been at the usual height, it would have very disagreeably impressed the retina. For ordinary uses, it would be necessary to subdue the glare by the interposition of an enamelled globe—a gratuitous waste of light. A glittering point fatigues the eye and does not sufficiently disperse its luminous rays. Indeed, the principle of the dispersion of light for illumination is less generally considered than it ought to be.

The intensity of a light is of less consequence than the number of luminous points employed. In this respect, the new system is clearly inferior to the one now in operation. Shining and illuminating are very far from synonymous. Without coming to any certain conclusion, it is possible that the Drummond light, theoretically economical and superior to gas in intensity, may not present, in actual practice, the same advantages for general lighting.

M. Henri de Parville—to whom we are indebted for the substance of this article—therefore holds that it would be rash to state, as many have done, that we are on the eve of a complete revolution in our modes of lighting.

He goes no further than to assert that M. du Motay's process simply supplies us with a luxurious method of lighting which cannot fail to be adopted here and there—in large public establishments, theatres, and hotels—but he scarcely ventures to believe that it is applicable in an exclusive manner to the public service.

We ought also to think of the danger incurred by the close neighbourhood of a couple of gases whose mixture is violently explosive. Escapes of ordinary gas cause accidents enough; escapes of oxygen and hydrogen together would considerably multiply the chances of mishap. Lastly, an escape of pure oxygen might have disastrous consequences, and cause many a smouldering spark to become a devastating fire.

Moreover, the magnesia cylinders wear up quickly; they have to be renewed at least once a week. We thus make a return, in a round-about way, to the troublesome wick of our old-fashioned oil lamps. The inconvenience, though trifling in a private household, is serious when it extends to public lighting. The apertures which deliver the oxygen in the burners are much smaller than those for the hydrogen; hence arises considerable friction and the consequent necessity for increasing the pressure for forcing gas through tubes which may be several miles in length. Employed, however, as portable gas, oxygen may take an immediate part in domestic lighting. Experimental lamps, tried at the Tuilleries by the Emperor's order, have been crowned with complete success.

While the experiments at the Hôtel-de-Ville were being organised, M. Bourbouze, a gentleman attached to the Faculty of Sciences, was making essays which promise not less important results than M. du Motay's invention. The result obtained will bear comparison with the Drummond light, while the mode of production is much more simple. M. Bourbouze does not employ pure oxygen; he consequently avoids the dangers and inconveniences of the other system.

We have already stated that the intensity of a light depends on the activity of the combustion, on the quantity of oxygen supplied, and the quickness of the jet. M. Bourbouze, instead of supplying the flame with pure oxygen, subdivides the combustible into fine threads, bathes it in a great quantity of air, and wire-draws it, as it were, by means of air swiftly urged through holes of small diameter. He thus obtains effects analogous to those produced by the combustion of pure oxygen.

His process is this. He causes ordinary gas and air to enter a close vessel. The mixture thus obtained, passing through a plate pierced with a great number of holes, is subdivided into a multitude of little jets. These jets reach the under surface of a piece of cloth made of platinum wire, and are not set fire to till they have traversed the cloth. The metallic tissue is not of the ordinary pattern, it having been found preferable to substitute for a *cloth*, properly so

called, a veritable *crochet* stitch. This cloth (like the stick of magnesia in the Drummond light) under the influence of heat, becomes first red, and then white, finally emitting a dazzling light. In order to drive the mixture through the little holes, recourse is had to a pressure equal to a column of mercury thirty-two inches high. M. Bourbouze estimates the economy of his system to be at least fifteen per cent.

Be it remarked here that the metallic cloth prevents all danger of explosion, and protects the detonating mixture from the burning flame, exactly as the wire-cloth in Davy's lamp keeps the light within it from setting fire to the fire-damp without.

IN THE INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO.

AWAY in the Far East, dividing the Indian from the Pacific Ocean, and making a chain of volcanic islands between China and Australia, lies the great Asiatic Archipelago. European energy and enterprise have done something with these islands—to wit, Borneo, Java, and Sumatra—but more remains to be accomplished; and it is to be hoped that the Anglo-Saxon hand will make its mark felt before any other can take its place.

The most extensive volcanic band in the world runs through the Archipelago, taking a part of Sumatra, all Java, and the chain of islands to the east of it, most of the Moluccas or the Clove Islands, a small part of Celebes, and much of the Philippines. There are nearly fifty volcanoes in active operation, besides numbers which have become extinct. In 1815 there was a tremendous eruption from the Tomboro mountain in Sumbawa, the fifth island of the Sunda chain, which is said to have destroyed twelve thousand people; but there are continual outbursts from all the working volcanoes, which keep the inhabitants in a lively state of alarm. The more civilised inhabitants of this island of Sumbawa are the Mohammedans; but the mountaineers, are what they always were; though the followers of the prophet try to convert them to the true faith by going through their villages with whips and rods in their hands, crying out, "Dogs! do you wish to pray or not?"

Those who profess themselves converted wear a scrap of cotton handkerchief on their heads, eat pork only in secret, and build their houses after the pattern of the inhabitants of the plain. But they put their confidence in their stone idols just the same as before, and the inner man is untouched though the public faith may be altered.

Going back to volcanoes, there is a most singular volcanic phenomenon in Grobogan. This is a perfectly level and circular mass of black mud, about sixteen feet in diameter, and situated in the centre of the limestone district, which every two or three, or sometimes four or five, seconds rises to the height of about twenty or thirty feet, then explodes with a dull noise, and

scatters a volume of black mud in every direction. The exploded mud is warm, and the explosions are most frequent and forcible during the rainy season. Round about this central pond of mud are the brine springs, which yield an immense quantity of common salt, and which force themselves through apertures in the earth "with some violence and ebullition." The salt-makers' village and the central pond of volcanic mud are both known to the Javanese as Kuwu—"the place of abode"—and an old legend makes the spot to be the place of abode of a monster snake, whose writhings create the eruption.

The Javanese are famous for their pictorial vocabulary. One district is "Prosperity," another "The Country of Ghosts," a third is "The Unlucky," a fourth "Heroic Difficulty;" their great volcano—the formidable Ringgit—is "The Puppet;" an island is "The Land of Sorrows," another "Palm-wine Island," another "Sea Island," another "The Fallen," another "The Magic Island;" one river is "The Golden," and a second is "The Bachelor's River;" one river-mouth is "Coco-palm Mouth," another "The Mouth of Sobs;" an eclipse is the "sickness" of the sun or moon, as may be; the nobles and the people are "the whole and the broken grains of rice," or "the head and the foot;" and history, or rather romance, is "clearing land of forest;" for indeed their history is nothing but romance—a mere collection of legends, of no more value than the North American Indian's or the Fiji Islander's.

In the practical arts metal-working is their chief excellence, and they give the first place to the blacksmith, or rather to the cutler, in their hierarchy of labour. He is the "cunning," or the "skilful," and the respect in which he is held takes us back to the days of Wayland Smith; or, further still, to the times when the best metal forger was a god, and was given for wife the exquisite Goddess of Beauty. The Javanese cutler's finest production is the kris, or dagger, which has four different names and a hundred different forms. Every man and every boy of fourteen wears at least one kris as part of his ordinary dress; and men of rank wear two and sometimes four. The ladies, too, of high rank wear one; and some of the older weapons are assumed to be charmed, and, when sold, as they sometimes are by chance, fetch immense prices. In brass work they succeed best in gongs and musical instruments; their carpentry, or what we should call cabinet-work, is very beautiful, but they do not come up to the Sumatran standard in gold work.

The Javanese and the Sumatrans are of the same race, the Malayan, so that they ought to be alike; but there are wonderful natural dissimilarities between the two islands, though divided by a narrow channel only. Thus, the elephant and the tapir of Sumatra have no existence in Java; the orang-outang is Sumatran and not Javanese; the Sunda ox is Javanese and not Sumatran; the Argus pheasant

of Sumatra does not exist in Java, nor the pea-fowl, the rhinoceros, or the sloth of Java in Sumatra; the teak-tree, which is abundant in Java, is not found in Sumatra; and the dragon's-blood,* ratan, is peculiar to Sumatra. It is strange to see these differences within so short a distance and under the same physical conditions; but there are analogous instances nearer home, and human faculties and natural productions are both capricious and partial all the world over. Another instance of this partiality in human characteristics is the rarity in Java of the amuk, or running a-muck, as we call it, so general throughout all the Indian Archipelago, and specially characteristic of the Malay race. It seems to be a kind of madness, always connected, more or less intimately, with the liver and the digestive organs, but though common everywhere else throughout the Archipelago, it is exceedingly rare in Java; which fact alone shows some great diversity of nature and some national differences hard to be accounted for.

Most of the people of the Archipelago are Mohammedans, having been converted twice over, once to Hinduism, and again to Mohammedanism. But a few tribes still cling to the older faith, and among these are the people of Bali, the next island east of Java, and divided from it by a strait not exceeding a mile and a half in breadth. And, being Hindus, these people of Bali make away with their dead in a different manner from the rest of the Archipelagians. The Mohammedan Malays bury theirs, coffinless, unshrouded, within twenty-four hours after death; "and the word which expresses this simple ceremony," says Crawfurd, "literally signifies to place in the earth, and is the same which means to plant or put seed in the ground." The grave is without stone or tomb, save in the cases of kings and saints; the tombs of which last are holy; and the cemeteries are usually on the uplands or small hills near the villages.

The Kayan Dyaks of Borneo, being neither

* "This colouring substance (dragon's blood) is a granular matter adhering to the ripe fruit of a species of ratan, *Calamus draco*, and obtained by beating or threshing the fruit in little baskets. Within the archipelago the principal place of production is Jambi, on the north-eastern side of Sumatra. The plant is the wild produce of the forest, and not cultivated, although some care is taken to preserve it from destruction. The collectors of dragon's blood are the wild people called Kubu, who dispose of it to the Malays at a price not much exceeding a shilling a pound. The whole quantity produced in Jambi is said to be about one thousand hundredweights. This article is often adulterated by a mixture of damar (resin). The best kind imported into Europe in seeds is manipulated by the Chinese. The canes of the male plant used in former times to be exported to Batavia, and very probably formed the 'true Jambees' commemorated in the Spectator as the most fashionable walking-sticks in the reign of Queen Anne."—Crawfurd's Dictionary of the Indian Islands.

Mohammedans nor Hindus, dispose of their dead after their own fashion. They keep them from four to eight days, and even longer: the climate being hot, it must be remembered, and decomposition rapid. After the first day they put the corpse into a coffin scooped out of the trunk of a tree, and carved more or less richly according to the means of the family; day and night lights are placed at each side of the coffin, and if they chance to get extinguished it is considered most unlucky; also, for four or five days after the corpse has been removed, torches are kept alight in the place where it had laid. Before its removal a feast is prepared, part of the food being given to the dead body, while the relations eat the remainder. When the body is taken away, although then in a frightful state of decomposition, the women hang about the coffin, pressing their faces against it, and hugging it affectionately; and this they do until it reaches its final destination—a small wooden house or stage about twelve feet high from the ground, supported on four wooden posts. The tombs of the chiefs are built of hard wood, supported by nine massive posts from twelve to fourteen feet high, and all elaborately carved. Flowering shrubs and creepers are generally planted about these aerial tombs, and soon grow up round the posts and coffins, rendering decay beautiful and concealing death by life.

The Balinese, on the contrary, being Hindus, burn their dead; and the widows may choose between being burned with their departed lords, or being killed by the dagger. The wives of the rajahs, however, must be burned with their dead husbands; and when a rajah dies some women, if only slaves, are always burned with him. The wives of the priests never kill themselves. The description of the sacrifices is too horrible to be given here. There is something peculiarly ghastly in the mixture of beauty, youth, and death; of flowers and incense, and costly garments, with the flow of blood from a triplet of death wounds, and the last cries of the victim stifled by the scented smoke of the funeral pyre. It is such an awful sacrifice of young and vivid life for worse than nothing, that we do not care to dwell on it.

Dyak, or more correctly Dayak, is the generic term used by the Malays for all the wild tribes of Sumatra and Celebes, but more especially for those of Borneo, where they are most numerous. It seems to be their equivalent for our "savage." The various tribes of Dyaks in Borneo are in different stages of civilisation; some are nomads, living on fruits and such wild animals as they can catch; others have fixed dwellings—great barn-like huts where many families live together—cultivate corn and roots, rear the cotton plant, spin and weave it, manufacture malleable iron and steel, and breed swine, fowls, and dogs, but no beast of burden. They know nothing of letters, for they have neither invented alphabetic signs for themselves, nor adopted those of others; and into what tribes soever they may be sub-

divided they are all of the one true Malayan race—brown, short, and with lank hair. When they go to war, they clothe themselves in the skins of wild beasts, generally of the black bear; the rajah having a tiger's skin as his version of the royal purple. These skins are put over the head, and effectually cover the breast and back, leaving the arms naked. They are sword and spear proof; also proof against the arrows of the sumpitan, or the blow-pipe; and, with a shield made of light wood covered with skin, are tolerably good protection against native modes of warfare. But these Dyaks fight like furies. They have no idea of fear, and resist till they are cut to pieces. The temper of their cutlasses is such that an ordinary man can cut through a musket barrel at a blow. In fighting they always strike and seldom thrust; but, brave as they are in their own way, the bravest among them will shrink at the idea of firearms. They no sooner hear the report of a musket than they run deep into the jungle: if they are in their boats they jump into the water and rush to shore. The most rational have a superstitious dread of firearms. Each thinks the bullet is making directly towards him; and as they have not the least notion of the range of firearms, so long as they can hear the report they think themselves in danger. If they are out with Europeans on shooting parties, having advanced so far on the way of wisdom as to understand that aiming at monkeys is not aiming at themselves, they will ask the sportsman to aim at birds a mile distant, and think him ill-natured if he refuses. If he fires, and they see the bird fly away uninjured, they never consider it as a miss, being sure that the bullet will follow and eventually overtake it.

Their most valuable trophies are human heads, which they preserve by smoking over a fire, and which have all sorts of wonderful powers and properties. They are not only signs of prowess and victory, but they are necessary adjuncts in the ceremonials at marriages and funerals, and in births and in sickness. Nothing can be done without fresh heads, which propitiate the evil spirits of disease, specially of small-pox. Physic is folly compared with a human head, smoke-dried and brainless, for the healing of pustules and the destruction of fever; and there is no suffering and no danger that a Dyak will not face for the reward of a single head: male head be it understood,—women and children count for nothing. Indeed the women are seized as slaves by the victors, and like slaves soon accommodate themselves to circumstances, and take kindly to their change of masters. These Dyaks are terrible fellows for midnight attacks; and go down the river in their long canoes as swiftly as birds would skim on the water. If pulling up the stream, they keep close to the bank, and as they cover their paddles with the soft bark of trees no noise whatever is made. After paddling all night they pull up the boat among the overhanging trees and jungle, so that there is no trace or sign of their existence. Here they sleep

and feed on snakes, monkeys, or anything else they can kill with their blow-pipes ; if the chief wants food, if he wants meat that is, and cannot get it by these means, one of his followers is killed and cooked ; which not only solaces the hungry stomach of the great man, but gives him a head into the bargain. They commence the attack on the doomed village by throwing lighted fire-balls on the thatch of the huts, which immediately involve the whole in flames ; they then raise the war cry, and the work of murder begins. Not a man is spared ; each as he descends the ladder of his dwelling to escape from the flames, " which give just light enough to distinguish a man from a woman," is speared or cut down with the cutlass ; the women and children are seized as they endeavour to escape ; the great object being to prevent information finding its way to the other villages, so that there shall be no possible warning of the misery and slaughter at hand. In this manner the raid continues ; and the victorious chief returns with his boat-load of heads, women and children—the latter for slaves.

Many delicious fruits and beautiful flowers, as well as forest trees and spice trees, grow in these Indian islands. Of the fruits the mangostin is the best, according to European notions ; though, to the native, the durian is the one incomparable. It is a little odd that the same genus of tree, the *garcinia*, which produces this most exquisite fruit, produces also one of the most drastic and acrid of substances. Gamboja, a corruption of the Malay name of the chief country which produces it—Kamboja—is the yellow inspissated sap of the young gamboge tree, obtained by wounding the bark ; and it seems to be one of those strange bits of compensation found throughout all nature, that the mangostin fruit and the drastic juice gamboge, should be of the same genus. The mango is also an Archipelagian fruit, the varieties of which differ as widely as pears and apples here in England. Then there is the pomegranate, which, however, is an exotic, and which bears the same name as the ruby ; but the fruit is so poor that it ought to come under the head of flowers. The guava is another fruit, which we care for more as a preserve than when freshly gathered, but which the natives prize highly ; they class it with the jambu, calling one kind the seedy jambu, another the Chinese jambu, and so on. Limes, sweet limes, and shaddock or pomeloos grow in abundance through the islands. Oranges—the sweet orange proper—are generally inferior to those of the Azores, the south of Europe, and the north of India ; but there is a sweet orange with a green thick skin adhering closely to the pulp, that is very delicious ; and the mandarin orange, which attains perfection only at some three thousand feet above the sea level, is of first-rate quality. The shaddock—the tiger or Batavian orange—when carefully cultivated, is far superior to any grown elsewhere. Coco palms abound ; and of the bread-fruit, the *artocarpus* or jack-fruit, there are three kinds, all good.

There are plenty of fancy woods in the Archipelago. Sandal wood ; ebony or " char-wood ;" satin wood ; the *petrospermum Indicum*, which gives those beautiful little blocks known as Amboyna or Kyabucca wood ; the speckled woods of the wood palm—these are the best known and the most used in Europe. The palm family is, as always, one of the most useful of the whole forest. First in importance comes the coco palm, and then the gomuti, or *brassus gomuti*, which does a great many things. In the first place its sap gives sugar and an intoxicating beverage ; then, between the trunk and the fronds are found, first, a black horse-hair like substance, which makes the best cordage of the western islands of the Archipelago ; second, a fine cottony substance which makes the best tinder, and which is exported for tinder ; and, third, " strong stiff spines from which are made the pens of all the nations that write on paper, with the arrows of the blow-pipe of the rude tribes that still use this weapon." The pith gives an inferior kind of sago. The seeds have been made into a confection. Their pulpy envelope abounds in a poisonous juice—a strong infusion of which is used in the wars. The Dutch call the juice " hell-water." There are other kinds of palms beside this and the coco palm ; but there is not space for a full description of them within our present limits.

There are plenty of spice trees in the Archipelago—nutmegs and camphor trees, clove trees, &c. ; while rice, tobacco, and the sugar cane, safflower for a dye, capsicums, ginger, the coffee plant, and the cacao or *theobroma*, bananas and batatas, yams, maize, the *gluga* or paper mulberry tree, the abaca or textile banana, and the *pita* or pineapple leaf for grass cloths, cassia, cinnamon, and pepper, are just a few of the gifts and graces of these favoured islands. There are metals too, richly if partially distributed ; but only four—iron, tin, copper, and gold ; there are diamonds and coal fields (coal is " earth charcoal" in Javanese) ; there are sweet-scented gums like benzoin, and magic stones like the bezoar ; there is ambergris from the sperm whale, and civet from the viverra ; there are birds of paradise, or bird of the gods, as the native name goes ; magnificent fowls, pigeons, parrots, peacocks, but they are all dispersed in different localities. For the Asiatic Archipelago makes a wide tract altogether, and climate, customs, productions, and races vary, as must necessarily be the case in so large an extent of land, made larger yet in range by the intervening tracts of ocean.

There seem to be about five races of man in the Archipelago—the Malays proper, the *Sāmang* or dwarf negroes of the Malay Peninsula, the Negritos or *Aetas* of the Philippines, the large negroes or *Papuas* of New Guinea, and a race intermediate between these last and the Malayan, called by Crawfurd the *Negro-Malay*. The Malays proper are of course the superior

race and the more civilised people. They occupy the whole of the Malay Peninsula, save where a few wandering Negritos claim precarious subsistence and temporary lodging. They have half Sumatra and all the sea-coast of Borneo, and are computed to be about a million and a half strong in Borneo, a quarter of a million in the Malay Peninsula, and about a million in Sumatra. They are a short squat people, with round faces, wide mouths, high cheek bones, short small noses, black, small, deep-seated eyes. Their hair is lank, black, and harsh, and they have little or no beard. The Sānangs are a dwarfed, low-class negro race. The Negritos or Aetas of the Philippines are also short, but well made and active, the nose a little less flattened, soft frizzled hair, a skin less dark, and features more regular than those of the African negro. The Spanish expression is "less black and less ugly." The Papuas of New Guinea are also true negroes, and are the most respectable of all the woolly-haired race, having made some advances in civilisation, though still below the aboriginal inhabitants of Borneo. The Negro-Malays seem to hold an intermediate place between the Malays and the Papuas, being darker than the former and fairer than the latter, with frizzled hair growing all over the head, not in separate tufts, and with more the appearance of South Sea Islanders than of either the negroes or the Malays. Perhaps they are the next step to the Polynesians. Nature seems to go by strangely definite stages of progression, and as in New Guinea we come to the first expression of the marsupials, the pouched animals so eminently characteristic of Australia and New Zealand, so in the Negro-Malays Nature may have been trying her "prentice hand" on a new combination of atoms, something different from her Malayan sons and yet not quite like her negro offspring—a transition race, in fact—to see what kind of creatures the new pattern would make.

A PRINCE'S HOLIDAY.

I. A STEEPLE-CHASE.

HAVING seen the gayest of processions flash by, and having roared ourselves hoarse in shouting at—that is welcoming—the interesting young pair who have come to see a certain green island, we go to rest, and are up in time to rush down to the steeple-chase—Irish Derby—twenty miles away. This is a very happy shape of entertainment to welcome noble guests to the land of Charles O'Malley and of the great strong horses which cross country and take five-barred gates, and "top" walls with ease and enjoyment. Others have the conventional "laying the first stone," and Stubbly Volunteer's review, with the Stubbly ball in the evening; we offer the wares in which we are strongest, and in which we have some little credit. We are, besides, to have a week of galas, special of their kind, and an Installation, that is to be as sumptuously

theatrical, in its way, as a little coronation. Such is the fancy of our nation. We like any verging on dresses and decorations—we would not part with our court for the world.

To get down to the steeple-chase—Punchestown! a name inviting to both rider and horses—is a matter of almost appalling difficulty. To find a large railway terminus wholly given up to a crushing, shouting mob, frantically fighting for tickets, and taking them up in the air, clutching a partition which has been scaled; with ladies screaming and fainting, and betting roughs fighting, seems scarcely promising of entertainment. But the rush for trains is yet worse; and it is not a little dispiriting, though amusing enough for the non-combatant, to see train after train pass away slowly, every compartment packed closely, with people standing, sitting, and lying on each other; luggage vans, horse boxes, all packed in the same herring fashion, so much so that the lid of the cask cannot be made to shut them in tight—and they go off with doors flapping. Some one at last turning frantic at being left behind seven or eight times, and thinking it highly probable that he will be thus abandoned seven or eight times more, climbs to the roof, an example speedily followed, and thus by so happy a device a double freight is secured. As this heavy load trails away out of the station, it seems transformed into a mass of grinning, chattering faces, actually enjoying their cribbed and cabined situation, and shrieking and hooping with delight. Perhaps the sense of their own private discomfort, which will presently be horrible, is overborne by the delight of contemplating the lines of rueful faces left on the desert island, gazing with a miserable despondency, while the others glide away triumphant. Those hanging on behind, standing on the buffers, shout and yell with delight, while a few, grown frantic at the spectacle, take a leap, harlequin-like, and shoot bodily through the open window, and arrive headforemost in the packed mass within, who, willing to cast them out, are yet afraid to do so from the danger. Separate engines are out on their own responsibility; some crowded with smiling ladies, all tulle and bournous, in the hope of "picking up a train" somewhere along the line, while a gallant *militaire* or two, in all the glory of veils and speckless dust coats, is actually lying on the great pile of coals heaped in the tender. In fact the whole line near the station is given up to the populace, who swarm and surge, and go off in great masses to meet and carry by escalade the returning empty trains, which thus always arrive laden, and with swarms of human ants clinging to the steps and windows.

At last all the world has got down. Here is the course, said to be the prettiest one of the breakneck order in the kingdom; for nature and art have happily combined to furnish it with all the known choice morsels of danger, en masse as it were, and which, to other places, are distributed with but a niggard hand. The

day is of the loveliest—a true "ladies' day"—the country a charming corner. There is plenty of local colour. It is in a green and rich country, undulating, rising here into hills, falling there, pretty to look at, as a mere view, with a pleasant range of grey hills in the distance. The day is an Italian day, the air balmy and delicious. Who does not recall the glitter of a course, the "mother-of-pearl" sparkle from bright bonnets and brighter faces, and gayer dresses, that seem to shine and glisten like feld spar under a strong sun : the dark irregular fringe made up of carriages, which meanders and straggles afar off, and marks the line of the course—with the "drags," temporary temples of opulence, locomotive stands, in their way, and whose real function now seems to be established. They are luxurious race club-houses and buffets, stored with all the good things of earth and air. But we have besides local colouring in the cars of the country, which swarm, drawn by every known pattern of horse, and which can insinuate themselves in all sorts of clefts and passages between the greater monsters. At such a scene and on such an occasion, the spirit of gaiety and enjoyment seems to be enlarged, under the best conditions, and with her rosy pinions flutters all day long to and fro.

Now it is full time, rather, a good bit after time; but we are none of your stop-watch philosophers to-day. At the little modest station, some four miles away, have been waiting royal and vice-regal carriages—the scarlet outriders so familiar to Ascot, and the gentlemen of the hunt in their cheerful scarlet, and the green-coated police. At last there is a cloud of dust, and a roar—a surging of the multitude, and an avenue opens. First the mounted police, clattering and jingling, native soldiery of the place, the green hussars of the country. Then the scarlet stewards of the hunt; then the vice-king of the country; popular and admired for his magnificence, and style, and sporting taste; for his banquets and balls, and perhaps for his own good looks, and perhaps, again, for those fine black horses which draw his carriages and carry his outriders. Then noblemen and gentlemen, aides-de-camp riding, and a master of the horse; then scarlet liveries and royal outriders, and then the pleasant young pair, seen for the first time by thousands of the honest Irish peasants. Then rise the shouts and the waving of hats; then, too, it is seen that the fair and delicate princess's dress is of pale green, and that completes the victory. On they go amid a swelling chorus, gathering as it rises, and which utterly drowns a low hiss or two, which a few ill-looking but baffled Fenians try to make heard. There are criticisms. "Nice lookin' craythur!" and "O, Biddy, did you see the gown on her?" Then do prince and princess appear on the grand stand amid its glass and scarlet, and which is, indeed, more like an opera-box than a stand. They become introduced, as it were, to the world en masse, and the air is again rent.

Then the racing begins. Competent judges

have pronounced it a very pretty course, with "double ditch," and stone walls, and natural fences, and banks, and every obstacle that could be desired. English bookmakers complain that there is no money to be got; but the truth is the horses are mostly "dark," ridden by their owners, or gentlemen friends, and their merits are only known to a select few. Certainly the few seconds of a race, the flashing by to hollow pounding, the glittering of specks in the distance—now seen behind the trees, now lost to view, now reappearing over the line of the hedge, now drawing nearer to us, nearer and yet nearer—all to a roar of voices, gradually increasing as they draw near, and come sweeping past the stand in a rush, with the crowd closing in behind—this spectacle has, for its length, more excitement crowded into it than any other. The course, we note, is kept in a pleasant, *dégagé*, lounging fashion; and I observe that people are so eager to see the "big Lep" over the stone wall, that they scramble eagerly up on it. When they see the horses charging at it "full tilt," the parti-coloured arms of the jockeys, well squared and sawing at their horses in the usual characteristic manner, a panic seems to seize them, and they turn round in a wild manner to see how they are to get down. Paddy, in the frieze coat, has been left in charge of the "Lep," with a light stick, and grows frantic. "Get down, every mothers' son av yes! D'ye see the harses comin'? Ah, you Bundhoon, you!" This was addressed to one of his own rank, who, indignant at the insult, turns round under the wall to resent it, but hears the coming thunder on the other side, and darts back, only in time. The ardent amateurs are flying in all directions; but one unhappy woman is caught, and ridden over. One skilful artist here shows his jockeyship; for his horse trips at this jump, but recovers, nearly sending the rider over his head, who luckily catches his horse's neck, and hangs on literally at one side. The horse rushes on, the rider tries gallantly to save himself, and, after hovering some seconds "between the stirrup and the ground," and failing in two or three attempts, at last lands gallantly in the saddle, to a cheer from the applauding crowd.

By this time the race is over, carriages and drags burst open as if they were hampers themselves, and give up meats, and salads, and champagnes, and all the delicacies of the earth; and when the great race named in honour of the royal guest of the day is over the sun has begun to decline, and it is time to depart. But now everything looks different. Moistened eyes see everything with a heated and obstreperous loyalty. So, when the procession is again formed, and the royal lady in green passes by, the progress is indeed tumultuous and triumphant. A vast number of unrecognised aides-de-camp insist on making part of the procession, and rush by the side of the carriage, their hands on the door, waving their hats and caubeens in the face of the object of this homage, and bellowing loyal cries. The effusion is supreme—alarming

almost. The contrast between that fair and delicate creature thus invaded, and the flushed and delighted faces, is almost ludicrous. But it was meant well and heartily. Since the great day of London-bridge there has been no such welcome for her as at Punchestown. With that we all begin to disperse and get home as best, or rather as worst, we can—that is, on the engine, among the coals, in the horse-boxes and cattle-vans, and, more agreeably, on the tops of the carriages.

II. THE INSTALLATION.

THE old cathedral, where the great dean was in office—and where the large, dark, saturnine face had often been seen in the choir reading the offices, while that tremendous soul within was preying on itself, wasting with rage and disappointment at exile and neglect—was for long, a tottering decrepit pile, broken down, awry, and propped up with crutches. Lately came a large-hearted and generous man, with a stout cheque-book, the best medicine of the day, which brings health, strength and beauty, and gave back to the decaying veteran new limbs, new bones, and new skin, and new blood. It now almost challenges notice from a jaunty and spick and span air. Here are the stalls of the knights of St. Patrick—the swords and banners and reliques of the good old pre-union days, when there was a great deal of pleasant theatrical spirit abroad, and a taste for glitter, and for shows and processions.

Here is a strange old quarter, a very rookery, a nest of narrow old streets, of squalid lanes, of ruined houses, and mean alleys, which in those old days were once "fashionable" and select, and, like reduced gentlemen, have sunk into degradation and necessities lower than any which would have befallen the regular poor. To this quarter it has been decided to bring our prince in a procession, the like of which has not been known within the memory of man, and to make an Irish knight of him with a pomp and splendour that shall long be talked of. Again the day is bright, the sun shining, and that pleasant feel is abroad over every one, the result of fine weather and good spirits combined with a show. For months preparations have been going on—and now at last all is ready.

The city has very much the air of a foreign town. There are ambitious buildings in the Greek manner, and little breaks and vistas, irregular and highly picturesque. The grim manufacturing element is far away. On this festival all the streets are lined with soldiery, and from the gate of the rather gloomy castle, down the steep hill which leads from it, on by the old Parliament House, by the College, the squares, the huge St. Stephen's green, appears this broad scarlet avenue, with its sparkling silver bayonet fringe. On the outer edge clusters the usual coarser black fringe of the commonality. All business is stopped, all carriages save those going to the show, must retire into back

places. There is the roar and hum of expectancy, the distant braying of military music passing on afar off, including the great orchestra of the guards, whose tuneful strains have made many a twinkling foot move to music so pleasant. There are the usual false alarms when a general or an inferior player is taken for the principal. At last it comes—a stately procession, soldiers, carbineers, lancers, a dozen of state carriages, liveries blazing with gold and scarlet, and goes by in a roar and a shout that is passed on, and which to the persons thus saluted must seem to be one prolonged cheer from the first starting point to the last. But as it begins to trail through the squalid Ghetto—the narrow network of streets that lead to the cathedral—the hill and dale slums that cluster about it, conceive the amazement of the inhabitants of this quarter at such an august invasion! From the windows of the cracked and tottering houses, where the view is not impeded by clothes hung out to dry, look out unkempt heads packed close; while below cluster thickly an immense throng of the unwashed commonality. Poor souls, it is long since they have been so disturbed in their half savage retreats, and, above all, so dazzled by the cluster of superior mortals who have been coming and going all this month. And now the bearskins appear, and the lines of soldiery have made their way down, lining these Seven Dials, as they might be called—a great day for Ireland, indeed!

Inside the pale yellow cathedral, all is ready, with all in their places, waiting—a scarlet pathway from end to end, between two vast banks of human flowers, potted and bedded there without crush or confusion; gay bonnets, and laces, and dresses, and ribbons, fluttering in the sun, and dotted with scarlet—every one seated, every one waiting. The colours, the faces, the shifting of tones, with the pale-blue colour of the Order; the thrones and canopy, the galleries where the musicians are, and the distant view, through an arch, of the chapel where the chapter is to meet, all unite to please the eye. Every one of note and every dignitary is there—English, Scotch, and native. Here are the peeresses in their own department, the wives of the knights of the Order; judges in scarlet and ermine, chancellors in gold and black; privy councillors with gold laid on in rich splashes and daubs; soldiers' uniforms in profusion—all clustered according to their degree; strangers from all parts; Lord Mayor of London and other civic potentates; English bishops, English earls and nobles; and in a place of honour, the "skilful Irishman" who has seen and described more gaudy shows than any one in the world—from a coronation at Moscow to a marriage at Windsor—and whose picturesque touch will presently draw the whole scene for the most important journal in Europe.

At last! Now we, so long in restraint, so patiently waiting, hear the faint sounds of martial music, far away and drawing near; with

the more stirring strain of lively cheering; now we, who have a good view, glance down to the great door, where the curtains have been drawn up, and see the flitting by of many figures against the daylight. Now, at last, a strong corps of trumpeters make their instruments blare—a flourish that echoes down the nave and floats up again. Now the organ, and the drums, and trumpets, and voices break out, and one of the most picturesque processions conceivable begins to come up slowly; seeming to gather as it goes by, in magnificence—beginning with humble retainers, beadle, and vergers, and sober colours, and becoming gradually gorgeous and golden. Soldiers, maces, "household" in the golden robin-redbreast coat; the "Esquires," great Life-guardsmen and guardsmen, two to each knight, and the knights themselves—noblemen of the best blood in the land, their sky-blue mantles sweeping behind them, their stars glittering. Then the genius of the whole—"Ulster"—who rules the heraldic world, unrivalled in pageant of this sort, supported by his two assistants. No one so skilled in *those* mysteries—so firm, yet so courteous. Then the Grand Master, the stately Viceroy—a true Hamilton—his train carried by Gainsborough blue boys—three miniature little noblemen, in slashed satin doublets and trunks; then the state sword, carried by a nobleman; then the prince's cloak and sword, carried by more esquires; then the Postulant himself, and, finally, the great ladies whom the English Earl of Shrewsbury, becoming here "Grand Seneschal of Ireland," has marshalled. So they continued to pass by for many minutes into the chapter-room.

Then, after some formalities, they emerge again; and, to some pretty and dramatic organ music, the ceremony goes on. Every knight passes to his stall; in front of him stand his two esquires, over his head his own banner and sword. Then the new knight is brought to the Grand Master, and kneels before him while the sword is girded on and the blue robe and collar are adjusted. Other blue mantles cluster round, and archbishops read the mystic forms. The most picturesque moment is when the esquire stands in the middle and unfurls the knight's gaudy banner, swinging it in defiance, and the trumpets twang out a cheerful blast, and Ulster, coming to the front, proclaims the style and titles of "the most puissant" knight. Best of heralds!

Then it begins to pass away. The tall knights and their squires, the little blue pages, supplemented by more, to bear up the new knight's train; the dignified Grand Master; the three brilliant ladies in snowy white; the pale lady in deep blue, who is most of all interested, vanish in succession. It seems like a soft dream, and we are sorry the spell has been broken. It looks like going back to a mediæval time; yet there were few there to whom it seemed such. With so much poetry going out of the world, it was pleasant to have such a relic left. Even a doctrinaire would have been moved. It may have

disturbed the grim ghost of the great dead dean. But to the crowd, Celtic and perfervid, it was deeply and poetically interesting.

EASTER MONDAY AT PORTSMOUTH.

It is not a pleasant thing to go to bed knowing that by four o'clock next morning you must not only be up and dressed, but actually at a railway station which is some two and a half miles off. It is not pleasant to wake again and again, as I did on the night of last Easter Sunday, each time believing that you have overslept yourself, and that you will be too late for the train by which, and by which only, you have any chance of getting a place. It is still further from pleasant—no matter how much you may "make believe" that it is not unpleasant—to get up at three A.M. on a cold north-windy morning, to dress as best you can by candlelight, to break your fast upon some coffee which is half cold, half sediment, and wholly bad. Least of all is it pleasant to find yourself at four A.M. shivering on the platform of the Victoria Station, and to find out that, what between the military and the volunteer authorities, you, being a mere civilian, have no more chance of getting away by the train which you suffered so much to be in time for, than you have of being made Archbishop of Canterbury or Lord Mayor of London.

May every blessing through life attend upon that railway official—I don't know whether he was a simple porter, or the station-master, or the chairman of the Board of Directors, but a man in authority over others (saying to this guard, "Come," and he came, and to that driver, "Go," and he went)—may every blessing in life, and, as a Spaniard once added to me, "the advantages of a happy death," attend upon that man. He saw my forlorn, unbrushed-up, and non-volunteer appearance, and asked me whether I was not "a gentleman connected with the press," to which I replied, with a most unblushing untruth, that I was. He then hustled me forward, pushed me back, shoved me to the right, pulled me to the left, spoke some words to a very pompous military man (all cocked-hat and Piccadilly weepers), who looked at me as if I was many degrees more inferior than nothing, and at last got me into a first-class railway carriage, into which then poured five gallant volunteers, with their muskets, pouch-boxes, havresacks, and heaven knows what besides. And a more cheery set of travelling companions it was never my lot to journey with. They all seemed to know each other, and, although evidently surprised at my being amongst them, were as kind and hearty as if I had been one of themselves. They asked me no questions.—I believe they took me to be some railway magnate going down with them to see that every thing was properly managed. And as they did not interrogate me, I did the same by them. I did not even ask them the name of their corps. One or two of

them had flasks of the most undeniable pale brandy it was ever my good luck to come across, to which they made me most welcome. I think I must have had three or four good pulls out of their various flasks. One of the party had an immense cigar-case, filled with as excellent cigars as ever were smoked, and which he pressed on me before I fell into a doze, which lasted all the way to Portsmouth, when I was awake by the train stopping, and the whole party tumbling out to look for their corps and make what arrangements they could for breakfast.

Still more than half asleep, I made my way to a small inn, which I rather think was a private house doing duty for the day as a place where breakfast was to be procured for a consideration.

Very good the breakfast was, and very reasonable the consideration—only one and six-pence. My inward man refreshed with food, and my outward person invigorated with a wash, I felt quite another being, and set out to make what observations I could respecting the Great Volunteer Review of 1868.

Whatever our railway system may have been formerly, it certainly left little to be desired on Easter Monday last. It was about eight A.M. when the train in which I had obtained a seat reached Portsmouth, and two hours later the whole great army of volunteers had assembled in the town. My sleepiness got rid of, I took some pains to ascertain the number of men under arms, and found that, including nearly two thousand regular infantry and about eight hundred regular artillery, they amounted in all to a fraction less than thirty thousand, with fifty-two guns—a force by no means insignificant, even if our great naval seaport and arsenal had to be defended from the attack of a real living enemy.

Taking them individually, nothing could be better or more workman-like looking than the great majority of the volunteers; it was, to my eye at least, only when they were brought together that their imperfections showed forth, and these were by no means of a very serious nature. The immense variety of uniforms amongst them, the smallness of some of the corps, and the immense comparative size of some of their bands, are faults which these gallant fellows might—or rather which the authorities ought—to overcome. Thus one corps—I was told it came from the West of England—certainly did not number more than sixty or seventy men, but it had a band—and a very good one too—that was very nearly as numerous as the regiment. Now, no doubt but that a large band is an advantage. The great fault of our English military bands is, that they are not half strong enough, whereas in the French army they exceed ours by nearly double the number, and are in consequence all the more martial in their music. But a French band is for one regiment, and every French regiment numbers three battalions, each battalion numbering eight hundred men. For such a corps a body

of fifty or sixty musicians is by no means too strong in numbers. But when a rifle volunteer corps that stands on paper less than three hundred men, and when under arms perhaps less than two hundred, has a band of music equal to that of a French regiment, the foolishness of the proceeding must be obvious. The strongest brigade at Portsmouth, on Easter Monday last, numbered two thousand one hundred men, or three hundred men less than a French regiment of the line. But how many bands of music there were in that brigade, who can say? Not I for one. It seemed to me, before the troops unpiled arms and fell in, that every fourth or fifth man your eye came across was a bandsman of some sort or other. And yet, in the seven battalions of English Foot Guards—three of the Grenadiers, two of the Coldstreams, and two of the Scots Fusiliers—there are but three bands; that is one band for each regiment, and the said band always remains at head-quarters, each battalion having its own corps of drums and fifes, just as in the French army.

Would it not—this was a reflection of mine more than once during the day of the great review—would it not be a good thing if our volunteers were formed into larger bodies—say into regiments of at least a thousand or twelve hundred strong—and had fewer military bands and less variety of uniforms? The number of the latter is perfectly astounding, and is, at a great assembly like that at Portsmouth as bewildering as the different tongues at Babel must have been. There were in that army of thirty thousand men something like a hundred different uniforms amongst the infantry alone. There were scarlet tunics, and grey, and brown, and green, and slate-coloured, and mud-coloured. There was silver lace, and white-worsted lace, black lace, green cord, red cord, purple, blue, white, and yellow. Some corps had very neat knickerbockers and serviceable leggings; others long trousers over Balmorals; others what the Yankees call “skinned boots,” which means boots drawn up over the trousers. Why should this be? Why not let the volunteers settle what uniform they prefer, and let it be adopted throughout the whole force? The British line are all dressed in the same way; the only distinction between the corps being the number on their caps and shoulder straps. The militia corps are also all uniform, being dressed like the line, save that their lace is silver instead of gold. The great mistake of all the fancy work in volunteer uniform was fully shown on Easter Monday. It is impossible to make men dressed differently look well together in the same battalion. And yet, on a review day like that at Portsmouth, adjutants and brigade-majors are obliged to produce a great deal of patch-work in order to equalise the corps, and the consequence was, that volunteers in grey tunics with green lace had, in many cases, to march in the same company as others in brown tunics with red lace. All this is wrong. It does not make the best of what we have at our disposal, and gives the whole body, so to speak, the appearance of

an army made up of fragments instead of one large whole. Surely the initials and number of the corps might be worn on the shoulder-strap, as is the case in the English line regiments? It is now eight years since the volunteer movement commenced, and we ought to be more advanced than we are in these small matters of details.

But as I stand watching the several corps as the volunteers finish their breakfasts and come together at their various rendezvous, I think to myself how infinitely more soldier-like they are in every respect than the old garde national of France. Very many men now barely of middle age must remember those wonderful citizen soldiers that used to mount guard at the Tuilleries in the days of Louis Philippe. They were, of a truth, a sight and "a caution." Above the waist they were tolerably uniform in their dress, except that as often as not their pouch-belts were slung over the wrong shoulders. But in trousers and boots they wore what they liked, and wore it how they liked. Some had black cloth evening "pants," with their varnished boots and tight straps. Others wore white trousers cut as wide as a seaman's, with gaiters to match. Many adhered to the blue regulation trousers with red stripes, whilst their companions revelled in the same coloured garment, but plain and without stripes. Now our volunteers have none of these most unsoldier-like ways. With very few exceptions, they are all dressed in a workman-like fashion, and, although the different corps vary too much one from another in their uniforms, every member of each corps is accurately dressed in his proper uniform, and nearly every uniform looks as if meant for use and not for show.

There was certainly not much time lost on Easter Monday before the work of the day began. It was ten o'clock before the last trains had arrived from London, and by eleven the marching past had commenced with one half of the force, whilst the other half—very much to their disgust—were altogether cut out of this show part of the review, and were sent off post haste to Fareham, Havant, and Cosham, there to take up their several positions for the attack in the forthcoming sham fight, the defending corps being detained to march past on Southsea-common. Here, again, the volunteer band nuisance showed in full force. The marching past of some of the regiments was entirely spoilt by the band which had played before the preceding corps being changed just as they came opposite the saluting-point. Thus the step was lost, and the whole corps thrown into confusion just at the most critical moment.

And here, as an old soldier who worked at the business more than a dozen years, I would say a word or two about this part of the day's programme. With even ordinary good arrangement, there ought to have been plenty of time for a march past of the whole volunteer army as well as the sham fight. "Our special correspondents," and other amateur writers upon

the volunteer review, seem to take great pains to run down as utterly useless the usual marching past at these reviews. But I would ask how, in the name of common sense, are the general commanding and the other military authorities to see what the troops are like in their appearance unless they march past? And with proper arrangements this part of the review need not last very long. Twenty-five years ago, when the armies under Generals Nott, Pollock, and Sale returned to British India from Afghanistan, I saw a hundred and fifty thousand men march past Lord Ellenborough at Ferozepore in one hour and forty minutes. Surely our thirty thousand volunteers would not have taken so long to defile before General Buller at Southsea last Easter Monday? Say that the march past had commenced an hour earlier, there would have been plenty of time between eleven A.M. and three P.M. for the sham fight.

But the fact is, we are not fair to our volunteers; we expect them to run before they can walk. We give them every Easter Monday far too much of this sham fighting, and look—that is, the authorities look—too little at the improved or decreased steadiness in their parade movements. What inducement have either corps or individuals to pay attention to their drill, and to improve in their general steadiness, when they are not so much as looked at on the only day on which they appear in public? The march past at Portsmouth was a success, and a very great one—of that there can be no doubt. What it suffered from, was too much band and too little knowledge on the part of company officers, the latter being a complaint to which every volunteer corps is very liable. As a general rule, the mounted officers know their work well, being for the most part old line or old Indian officers. But not so the captains and subalterns. And if we really want our volunteers to be what they ought, an examination, or some other positive test of military knowledge, ought to be insisted upon for every person who aspires to a commission in the citizen army. This should be exacted not only before an officer is gazetted to an ensigncy, but also when he obtains every subsequent step.

Some military men believe, or make people think that they believe, that our volunteers would only be of use in the event of an invasion, if placed behind stone walls. I am not one who holds this opinion. I feel quite certain that if we gave them fair play, and only allowed them to be commanded by men who knew their duty well, the volunteer army would fight as well in the field, would be quite as easy to handle, as our regular troops, and would be able by their superior education and intelligence to take even better care of themselves. All soldiers are more or less unsteady when brought first under the fire of an enemy. This has been proved over and over again in every army. But why should our volunteers not do as well in a campaign as did the many hundred thousand Amer-

ricans who never handled rifles until called upon to fight in the great civil war a few years ago? Even with the comparatively small force now at command, we have a nucleus of regiments and brigades, which could, and no doubt would, be strengthened to almost any amount in case of invasion. But the nucleus must have a different and a better style of officers as captains and subalterns; or at least those now filling these positions should be all obliged to do what many of them no doubt have done—be obliged to learn their duty, and practise it for two or three months with a regular corps before they do so with volunteers.

As a proof of what I say, I would instance a volunteer artillery corps that marched into Portsmouth the day but one before the review. The commander of the battery is an old Indian campaigner, who for many years commanded a troop of horse artillery in the Western Presidency; and I wish I had half as many sovereigns at my bankers as he has seen cannon-shots fired in earnest. Most, if not all, the officers under him are civilians who never served in the regular army. But they have all thoroughly learnt their duty, and the consequence is that the battery would not cut a bad figure even at Woolwich. Let these men but take the field for a campaign, and in three weeks they would be every bit as serviceable as the best regular artillery. And much the same may be said of all the volunteer artillery corps. To unlimber, fire, limber-up, and drive guns—to bring them into position, and to advance or retreat as ordered—every officer, and indeed every gunner and driver, must have a fair knowledge of his work. This the commissioned, non-commissioned, and rank and file feel, and therefore they learn their duty thoroughly. I may be wrong—perhaps I am—but it strikes me forcibly that our volunteer infantry “go in” too much for firing, and neglect other portions of their military training.

But one thing can hardly fail to strike every person as the troops file past the general commanding, and that is the wonderful number of well-built, sturdy, strong, clean-made men in the ranks of every corps. Here and there we see a volunteer who has run a little to seed, and whose waist is a matter of history. There are, too, a few seedy, weedy-looking individuals, but both these are rare exceptions from the general rule. This strikes me still more forcibly when I follow the corps that have gone off to form the attacking army, and who for four and a half mortal hours are never for one minute off their legs, and seldom standing still. Considering the sedentary lives that most of these men lead, and that the greater number of them never go through a really hard day's work except at this annual review, it is astonishing to see how few of them knock up or are obliged to fall out of the ranks. I am certain that more regular soldiers break down at an ordinary Aldershot review than I saw break down at Portsmouth, and yet I can safely say that I was in every

quarter of the field at one or other part of the day's manoeuvres.

In the sham fight of Easter Monday last there was a new feature introduced. Soon after the engagement became general, two gun-boats and a number of steam launches came puffing up Porchester Creek, the latter towing a whole flotilla of pinnaces. These took up their position opposite the village of Paul's Grove, which was supposed to have fallen into the hands of the attacking enemy, and upon the latter they opened a fire which was splendid to witness. But previous to this a battery of heavy guns, which were required to defend the Portsmouth lines, had to be taken up the earth-works. These were, of course, too steep for the employment of horses, so the guns were taken in hand by their gunners, helped by a regiment of volunteer infantry, and were all run up into position in almost as little time as it takes to write this description of what volunteers can do in the way of actual work, and this estimate of what they would do in the field if required.

A detailed plan of the sham fight would be interesting to those, and only to those, who know the country about Portsmouth. The first and second divisions—that is the force that did not march past—were supposed to form the enemy, which had advanced from Fareham, had taken the three forts on Portsdown-hill, and had made the lines of defence at Southwick the base of their operations. So much for the attacking enemy. The defenders were the third and fourth divisions, aided by regular artillery and infantry. The defenders had to drive back the enemy from the lines, and to do this, under cover of the fire from the gun-boats, they had to make a sortie over a pontoon-bridge, which was placed over the creek in a very short space of time by the regular engineer corps. Then they had to attack and carry the villages of Cosham and Wymering, and thus force the position of the enemy, turn his flank, and drive him back over the Portsdown-hills. For a time the enemy had decidedly the best of it; the turning-point for the defenders being when the gun-boats opened their fire from the creek. When the enemy began to give way, and the defenders crowded out after them in regiments and brigades—when they seemed ready to swarm like ants out of the lines to drive away the attacking force—was the finest sight of the whole day. As I said before, to enable them to cross the creek a pontoon-bridge had to be constructed, and in less than a quarter of an hour from the time when it was commenced, artillery guns passed over it. Nothing could be better conceived than the whole plan to give our volunteers an idea of what real warfare is, particularly the kind of warfare which, if ever their services are required, they will be very sure to witness.

By a few minutes after five o'clock the business of the day was over: the last shot was fired, and regiments began to move towards the railway station on their way back to

London. But before going with them to the trains, I must remark upon what seemed to me the most wonderful part of the whole proceedings. This was the comparative freshness, and the unvarying good temper of every volunteer—at least, of every one that I came across. There was hardly a man present who had not been up and dressed shortly after three A.M., and some even previous to that hour. They had walked through dark streets to join their respective corps, and had marched through London to the different railway stations with the cold north wind. Many had to wait on the platforms for an hour or more until their turn to depart came. Then three hours or so of railway, and since that seven hours continually on the tramp. They were white with dust as to their hair and clothes, and black as to their faces and hands with the cartridges they had been handling all day. And yet with all this—to say nothing of the want of regular meals, which no Englishmen, as a rule, can approve of—I did not hear a single attempt at grumbling, nor anything but the most good-tempered remarks and jokes on all sides. Throughout the long day only four men applied to the medical officers—two had suffered from slight accidents, and two from illness. If there is not the making of a fine army in men like these, where are we to look for efficient soldiers? I have seen three times that number of soldiers fall out from an ordinary battalion drill in an English garrison; and it should be remembered that on Easter Monday there were, besides the regular troops present, twenty-seven thousand, and more, volunteers.

I confess that I came back from Portsmouth with altered feelings about the volunteer force. All professions, and all professional men, have their prejudices. Mine, as a military man, were that the volunteer movement was very pretty soldiering in play; but beyond this I would not allow that it could be of any use, save, perhaps, to keep young men out of mischief by inducing them to go to drill and perfect themselves in shooting. But I now believe that the defence of the country could be entrusted to this force, and that if we only made the most of the men, and officered them a little better, we might, in a very great measure, do away with our standing army. As a French gentleman, who was present at the review, remarked to me, "the very name of this citizen army shows what a wonderful force it is. To think that nearly thirty thousand men would, of their own free will, go through a day's fatigue like this without the slightest personal advantage to be gained, and that peers, wealthy commoners, members of parliament, professional men, merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, and even labouring men join heart and hand in a voluntary movement of this kind, shows more than volumes could do the great strength of this nation. It is only in Britain, in the British colonies, or in the United States of America that such a sight could be possible. Nowhere else would even the meaning of the word volun-

teer be fully understood." And I must say that I quite agree with the moral which my French friend drew from the Easter Monday display at Portsmouth.

SISTER ANNE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It is well for me that when I settled down here a lonely old maid I gave up the world, and such praise or blame as attaches to actions of which the motives lie hidden and buried far beyond its ken. It is well for me, but it is a good that has its drawbacks, and my heart ached last night when Mrs. Bugden left me.

I sat by the open window looking out on the grey coast that wound away through the blue evening mists, and at the dark sea breaking on the shingle with a broad white edge of foam. I watched the stars coming out in the sky with a timid glittering light, and as the breeze passed over my little garden and brought me the fragrance of the flowers which are now my great delight, I thought: "Have I deserved this? Have I deserved, because, for reasons which my judge in Heaven alone must know, I have severed myself from the society that was most dear to my heart, have I deserved to be thought heartless?" Quick and sure came an avenging "No!" But who heard, who will ever hear it? Not poor Mrs. Bugden, nor that world of which she so zealously made herself the echo. Then it is well for me, as I said, that I gave up the world and its praise and blame when I chose this for my last resting place.

I must not complain; my home though lonely is very pleasant. My cottage is small, but then I have few visitors and no friends to come and share it, so there is no need for more room. If the furniture is plain, dark and brown, it is such as I like. And then I have books, and goodly company for winter. Noble poets, wise philosophers, and pleasant garrulous novelists, dealers in wonderful or simple tales, who can still lure me from myself and charm my old heart—old I call it, though my hair is black as when I was twenty; but it is not always by years that one must reckon a lonely woman's age. When I am tired of reading I turn to music; there, too, I deal with wonderful minds, souls great and tender, whose converse is very sweet. And then have I not my garden, my flowers, my exotics, and my ferns? For the climate is so mild that almost all the year round I can take pleasure in surveying or adorning the little world that calls me queen.

I came back here three years ago, and I have not forgotten how sad and lonely I felt when I entered this place. Here, then, I was to live and die. This little cottage, not half so large as the tombs the old Romans reared on the Appian way, was to be my last abode upon earth. The choice was mine and could be rescinded, but I knew it would not be—I knew it was final;

twice I had been wrecked, and I would not make a third venture. And yet I will not repine; if twice the wreck was bitter, twice too the voyage was sweet and fair; if twice I went through a great agony, it came after long happiness.

I was a very happy child. My father was wealthy, and we lived in an old Elizabethan mansion with a background of noble trees and a bright Dutch flower garden in front. My mother died before I could feel her loss; my godmother, Aunt Anne, replaced her for a time, and when she married and left us, my father found Miss Græme. I was sitting in the garden reading a fairy tale by the little trickling fountain, when I saw her first. I had been looking at the old red house, with its flight of steps and the terrace, and the vases of scarlet geraniums, until I had turned all these into the good fairy's palace. My book was on my lap, and as I listened to theplash, splash of the water which danced in the sunlight, and fell back bubbling over its broad stone cup into the basin below, I entered fairy land with the lovely little princess, whom the handsome prince was ever seeking and never finding, though even to my childish mind, it would have been so easy.

"Anne," said my father's voice. I looked up with a start, and there in the sunlight I saw Miss Græme. Was it the fairy tale I had been reading, was it something in her own young and gracious aspect that made her so lovely in my childish eyes? I have been assured since then that Mary Græme was by no means beautiful, though every one agreed that her dark eyes were very fine, and that her smile was irresistible. That smile shone on me when glancing up. I saw a young and slender girl in deep mourning, and who looked almost a child—the lovely little princess—as she stood by my stalwart father's side.

This was my governess. I soon loved her with a sort of passion. Miss Græme found in me a willing and docile pupil, and she did not merely teach me as she was bound to do, she also imparted to me some of her own tastes, and with them much endearing happiness. To her I owe not only my knowledge of, but also my love for music and flowers. How often, as I sit alone and play some grand passage from Beethoven, some tender and lovely air from Mozart, does Miss Græme's young face, lit by those soft dark eyes of hers, rise by my side, and smile on me once more—sweet, loving, and, oh! have I not proved it, and may I not say it, beloved? But even more than music do my walks in the country recall her. Many a time have we wandered together, she a happy girl, and I a happy child, in the green lanes where we watched the birth of the early flowers, the primrose, the violet, the lily of the valley, and others more humble still. Many a time have we gone forth to steal ferns from their shady haunts, glossy hart's tongue, delicate maidenhair, stately polypodies, wherewith to adorn our fernery! I am lonely now, but I will not deny you, my happy days, because you were followed

by some sad and dark hours! You did not pass away from my life, like sunlight from the landscape in summer time. When I look back I see you still in the past, bright, warm, and beautiful, in ever-abiding light. I do not know why my Aunt Anne did not like Miss Græme. Whenever she came to see us she had something unpleasant to say about that young lady herself, or about her mode of teaching me. Either I did not improve enough, or when that line of attack could not be taken, Miss Græme was not what she should be, or sometimes, by a subtle difference, was what she should not be. "I must say she is a little bit of a princess," once said Aunt Anne within my hearing.

My father raised his eyebrows, and burst out into one of his joyous genial laughs.

"I have seen some princesses in my time," he said gaily, "and my experience of the royal ladies is that there are not many of them half so charming as Miss Græme."

Now I was quite of my father's opinion; from the beginning I had identified my dear Miss Græme with the princess whose story I was reading when I first saw her, and as the love of children is not a silent discreet love, I took the very earliest opportunity I got of repeating to my young governess both Aunt Anne's speech and my father's answer.

"Aunt Anne says you are a little bit of a princess," said I, "and papa says he wishes princesses were half so charming as you are," I added triumphantly.

Poor Miss Græme turned crimson as she heard me, and no wonder—my father was in the room. His presence, which had seemed no objection to me, gave rather too much force to the compliment I conveyed.

"You little tell tale," said my father, pulling my ear, but all the time he was looking at Miss Græme, who blushed more and more.

Two months after this he married her. I wonder who was happiest on this wedding day! I have often thought it was I. It seemed such a grand thing that my dear princess should have found her prince in my tall handsome father; that she should no longer be Miss Greeme, but Lady William Sydney! Besides I was eight years old, and was to be bridesmaid, the only one Miss Græme would have, though in other respects the marriage ceremony was performed with great pomp, great ringing of bells, great strewing of flowers, and, as if Heaven itself had blessed it, with a great and glorious flood of the summer sunshine pouring down upon it. My father looked supremely blest. He was fifteen years older than his little bride, who seemed more childish than ever by his side; but I think the disparity in their years only endeared them the more to each other; as he loved her youth, so she loved his strength. The world, I believe, spoke of folly on one side and of designing art on the other; but I, who loved them both, thought there never had been such a pair out of my old friend, the Fairy Tales.

I was old enough to know better, but when

I saw them entering the carriage which was to take them away, and realised for the first time that I was to remain behind alone with Aunt Anne, my grief resembled frenzy. They could not drive off and leave me in that state, yet every attempt at consolation only made me worse. It was unreasonable, vexatious, and absurd; but the very folly of children makes them strong. I saw my father and his wife exchange perplexed and distressed looks; then I heard her whisper timidly, with her hand on his arm, and her dark eyes raised to his, "Shall we take her, William?"

He could not resist that pleading look to which paternal weakness in his own heart responded; they did not exactly take me, indeed, but I followed them in another carriage with my maid. We joined them at the station, and I accompanied them to the little seaside town up the coast, where they spent their honeymoon. On a beach like this I played and wandered with my dear young stepmother, and heard my genial father's happy voice calling us his two little girls. Very often when I go out alone of an evening and wander on the shore, I see myself a child again, with my hand in her kind hand. The tide which murmurs up to my feet is the tide of those bygone years; the faces which come out of the darkness of the past are those two dear faces, and I am happy, oh! very happy, and I pity those, from my heart I pity those, to whom such remembrances only bring sorrow.

Lady William Sydney's honours did not deprive me of my governess. She continued to teach me until my brother William was born, and though other cares then partly took her from me, she still superintended my education. The birth of that child was a great event in our circle. My father was never weary of looking at and admiring him, and I loved him more than I can say. He was like his mother, and I believe I loved him for her sake as well as for his own. He had her smile and her eyes, and though he was sadly indulged, he had her sweetness and rare charm. Every one loved that boy, so what wonder that I, his sister, and his elder by ten years, should love him with something of a mother's passion in my childish heart! He was my treasure and my darling, and I firmly believed this world held not another child so beautiful and so good as my little brother.

I was fifteen and William was five years old when my dear young stepmother one evening complained of a sore throat. She complained still more the next morning. The doctor was sent for, and his first act was to order the children out of the house. Spite of my protests and my tears, we were at once removed to the abode of my stepmother's cousin, a widowed Mrs. Gibson, who lived with her two children at the other end of the village.

Mrs. Gibson was a new comer amongst us. She owned two little cottages by the sea, in one of which she resided. She was a lady, but she was poor and I knew it; I did not know, how-

ever, that she lived in a house so small and so dreary as that to which Martha Vincent, my maid, now took William and me. The ruinous aspect of the place without, the low mean rooms within, depressed me, and when I went up to the apartment assigned to us, and looked down on the poor bare garden below, I felt strangely disconsolate.

"That's Rosebower," glibly said little Ellen Gibson, who had followed me in.

"Ma wants a tenant, but she can't get one."

A sky black as ink and which spoke of coming rain, lowered above a dilapidated cottage. A weather-stained board with the words to *LET* upon it stared at me over the garden hedge; but, young as I was, I wondered Mrs. Gibson expected a tenant for this desolate dwelling. The garden had gone wild and was full of weeds. Clematis had so overrun the porch that the door was half hidden with it. The roof looked mossy and insecure, and the window panes were shattered or broken. I thought of my father's Elizabethan mansion, so warm and red in the sunshine, of the old ancestral elms which grew around it, of the sunny garden and the fountain, and, above all, I thought of my dear stepmother, from whose presence I had been so ruthlessly banished, and hiding my face in my hands, I began to cry.

"What are you crying for?" asked Ellen Gibson crossly. "William," she called out, "do come and look at her—she's crying."

"Hush!" said I, showing her the bed on which my little brother already lay sleeping, with his rosy face turned to us; "do not waken him."

"I don't mean him," tartly replied Ellen, shaking her golden curls, "I mean *my* brother William," she added, nodding towards the garden where a young man was busy digging.

I peeped down at him, then drew back a little sullenly, I fear; it seemed as if there should be no William save mine, and I suppose Ellen, though by some years my junior, had the same feeling, for she said, with a little scornful toss of her pretty head,

"Is that stupid little boy called William?"

I felt my cheeks burn with indignation.

"He is not stupid," I replied, hotly; "he is very clever."

"He is stupid," persisted Ellen; "William says so."

If my William was perfect, her William was infallible, and his sentence was without appeal.

"William is not stupid," I said again, and I added, with stinging emphasis, "and he is not awkward, not at all—he knows how to sit on chair, and how to avoid treading on people's clothes."

The words were repented as soon as uttered, for though William Gibson was awkward, and though he fidgetted on his chair so as to make me unhappy, though he had trod on and torn my stepmother's dress when he came to our house with his mother and sister, I had no wish to make impertinent comments. But, to my

great relief, Ellen stared up at me and did not answer ; she had not understood.

"He is going to sleep at Rosebower to night," she said ; "mamma told Jane to make up a bed for him."

Alas ! what did I care for that information. The passing curiosity with which I had looked at the dreary untenanted cottage was over, and I was again desolate and heart stricken. I could not sleep that night ; I had no rest, no peace, the next day, and when evening came round I left my William playing with Ellen in the garden, and stole out unperceived. A lane at the back of the village led to my father's house. It was lonely, and along that lane I swiftly stole in the grey gloaming ; I was doing a wrong thing and I knew it, but the longing wish to see my stepmother again was stronger than conscience or duty. I reached the house unperceived, and so bided my opportunity that I crept up the staircase and entered her room unheard. My father was with the doctor below, the nurse, exhausted by her vigil, was sleeping in her chair at the foot of the bed. A night lamp burned on the table and lit the room very dimly. I remember how the tall mirror spread like a sheet of pale gleaming light before me, how the white curtains looked grey and dim as they fell around the bed where my mother had died thirteen years before this, and where my second mother, so tender and so dear, was soon to breathe her last. But I did not fear that then. I could not imagine anything like it. I came not for a last parting on this side of the grave ; but because absence seemed intolerable and love had drawn me. My great fear was that I should startle her ; also that I should hear reproof from those kind lips that were ever so reluctant to censure my childish misdoings. So my first words were :

"Dear mamma, pray don't scold me." She started, she motioned me away with her poor trembling hand.

"Go, go," she said in a voice so altered that I scarcely knew it : "don't come near me."

I thought her angry, and did not dare to approach, but neither could I bear to go at once.

"Oh, go, my darling," she entreated, "go ;" then, with sudden fear she added, looking round, "Where is William ?"

I replied that I had left the child at Mrs. Gibson's. This seemed to relieve her. She looked at me, and altered though she was, I knew the tender look of her eyes again.

"I was true to you," she said, "be true to the boy, be true to him after I am gone, and now go—go if you love me, Anne."

I obeyed her, but as I stood on the threshold of the door, I stopped to look at her and say softly,

"I will be true to William, I will be true." I said it meaning it, and yet not knowing how deep lay the meaning of my own words, nor how far into future years my promise extended. My stepmother smiled very sweetly as she heard

me, and I went away rejoicing that I had seen her, bearing that smile with me along the lonely lane, till I came back to Mrs. Gibson's cottage, and found William, who had not missed me, still playing with Ellen. I took him in my arms and kissed him.

"I will be true to you, my pet," I said, "won't I, that's all?" I said it, I meant it ; but little did I know that my eyes had seen their last of William's mother. It was William Gibson who told me of my stepmother's death. In what words he put the news, or how I bore them, I do not remember. I only remember that as he looked down into my face and held my hands in his, there was a great pity in his deep grey eyes. William Gibson had a grave kind face for one so young. I saw that even then ; but just as I saw the little garden in which I stood, and the red sunlight flashing back from the broken windows of Rosebower, whilst a stormy sky brooded over its low roof. What passed on that first dreary day I scarcely know now ; all is swallowed up in the sense of a great desolation, but the next morning I remembered all.

I felt unutterably wretched. I wished to see no one, to speak to no one. I stole away from Mrs. Gibson who wanted to comfort me, from Ellen who teased me, from my poor little William who was playing and laughing though his mother lay pale and dead in her room, and not knowing where to hide, I crept round to Rosebower. The little garden-gate stood open. I passed in and stole up to the cottage ; the door was open too, and pushing back the drooping clematis, I entered a low dark parlour. Beyond the window I saw and heard the sounding sea rolling up the beach with great heavy waves. It was moaning and lamenting, and its sad voice went to my very heart. I sank down on my knees, and leaning my head on the window-sill, I cried bitterly.

"Hush ! hush !" said William Gibson's grave tones behind me, "pray don't."

"I must, oh I must !" I replied, looking round at him through my tears, "I must cry because she is dead."

William Gibson, so shy, so nervous and awkward in every-day life, ceased to be so when anything moved him. He now gave me a clear resolute look ; he took my hand and made me rise ; he led me out of that dull dark room into the open air, and walking with me by the shore, with my hand still in his, he admonished me gently. He was my elder by some years. He was my superior in a hundred ways. He was good and he was strong, and goodness and strength have a rare power. He did not charm my grief away, for who could have done that, child though I was still, but he soothed the fever of the wound it was past his skill to cure. Ah, how gently, how tenderly, and how wisely, too, for a man so young, he dealt with me on that sad morning, and how my whole heart yearned towards him. I longed to tell him what I had said to his sister, and to ask him to forgive me.

"I am very sorry," I began, then I stopped short.

"For what?" he asked, kindly.

I felt myself turning crimson, and William Gibson, who was delicate as well as kind, put no further questions. And, alas! my penitent confession was not spoken. Many years later he asked me what it was that I had meant to say then, and when I told him, he shook his head and sighed.

CHAPTER II.

THE death of my dear stepmother was the first great calamity of my life, the first at least of which I was conscious. It did not merely pierce my very heart with grief, it was also the leading cause of almost every subsequent affliction which befel me. My father never recovered the blow. He had been a happy and prosperous man till then, but after his wife's death he became both sad and unfortunate. The judgment and industry which had won him wealth and his knighthood failed him in this great grief. He had heavy losses, speculated to redeem, became the prey of designing men, and died broken-hearted and ruined before I was twenty. My brother William was left wholly unprovided for; but from my mother I derived a small income on which we could live, and, thanks to my trustee and to William's guardian and mine, Mr. Rolt, we were not divided. We had to leave our old home, however, and oh! how my heart ached as, standing on the threshold of my dead stepmother's room, I looked back on everything which recalled her so vividly. Five years had not effaced her from my heart, or made her memory less dear; and when, leading William by the hand, I passed by the little fountain with its waters dancing in the sun, I seemed to see her dear face looking tenderly at her child and me through the shining spray.

Mr. Rolt was married, and with his wife and him we went to live, at Brompton. They were very good-natured people, and both belonged to what I will venture to call the sleeping tribe. Few things roused them; yet I should have been happy enough with them if my darling's prospects had not given me many an anxious thought.

Whenever I spoke to Mr. Rolt of my late father's affairs, he raised his hands and turned up his eyes to signify the deplorable state in which they had been left. Whenever I attempted to get hold of something like clear and definite information, he put me away with a "Oh, you girl! you girl!" that was both sweeping and contemptuous.

But when I was twenty-one matters changed. I then insisted on knowing how and why my

father's property had melted away; I insisted on talking to the lawyer myself, and that gentleman was heard to declare that "Miss Sydney was an extraordinary young lady. Such a head for business in a girl of her years was simply fabulous." Good old gentleman, I don't think my head was fabulous at all, nor were my abilities so very wonderful. If my interest alone had been at stake I dare say I should have let matters take their course, nor troubled my brain with the recovery of seemingly lost thousands. But you see there was William! William, my darling boy; William, my father's child, who looked at me with his mother's eyes and smiled that smile I had seen on her poor dear face the night before she died. I had promised her that I would be true to him, and feeling as I did, that if I did not care for him, no one would, I set my mind, my heart, my whole energies to the task of saving something for him out of our great wreck. Alas! I saved very little, not enough to give him the education of a gentleman. I had two hundred a-year of my own; I resolved to spare out of that whatever he might need, in order to live cheaply and yet not be alone in a strange place. William was to go to a German university. I wrote to Mrs. Gibson and asked her for that dreary Rosebower, which, as I knew, the poor lady still found it very hard to let. Both Mr. Rolt and the lawyer approved the course I was taking. I could not do better for the boy, they said.

"But you will find it lonely," remarked Mr. Rolt, "very lonely."

"I shall not mind, Mr. Rolt; besides, who knows but we may yet recover the forty thousand pounds that West Indian Monsieur Thomas owed my poor father?"

"Oh, you girl!" ejaculated Mr. Rolt.

"My dear young lady," coolly remarked the lawyer, "you will get the forty thousand pounds when Monsieur Thomas turns up—and he never will turn up in this world. I have told you again and again that according to my information the man is dead."

"My dear sir, the man cheated my poor father out of his money, but having heard of my wonderful talents for business, and being afraid of them, he pretends to be dead. Insects do it constantly, why should not a thief do it too?"

They laughed, and that was all the comfort I got from them. It was very hard to part from my dear boy, who was now eleven years old, but I went through it bravely, I believe. I know that women seldom make men, and I loved him far too much to wish to keep him near me, and ruin, maybe, the whole of his future life, so we parted. I gave him up to the friend who was to see him safe to Germany, and I went alone to Rosebower.

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